A DISCOURSE CONCERNING God's Act of Adoption.

To which is added,

A DISCOURSE UPON THE INHERITANCE OF THE Adopted Sons of God.

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A

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

God's Act of Adoption.

To which is added,

A

DISCOURSE

BRITISH MUSEUM

Adopted Sons of God.

THE PREFACE.

AS *to the Publication of my Thoughts upon the enſuing Subjects, what I have freely received of the Lord, I have freely imparted to the dear Saints. And tho' I* am ieſs than the leaſt of *them* all, *yet have I humbly offer'd my* Mite, *endeavouring to* ſpeak

the Truth in Love, *Eph.* 3. 8. and 4. 15. *as knowing that the same Spirit from Christ the Head, runs thro' every the least Member and Joynt of his Body, to the Edification of the whole, which is so fitly* joyned together, and compacted by that which every joynt supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, *as to* make increase of the Body, to the edifying of itself in Love, *ver.* 16. *And if the Lord will please to use me, tho' one of the least Members, to do any Service to his Body, by what I have wrote, verily I have my Reward.*

In what I have offer'd in the ensuing Discourse, concerning God's Act of Adoption, I have not so much insisted upon it as a transient *Act, that passeth upon the Elect in Time, but rather as it is an* immanent *Act from Eternity: Because, I judge this to be the Foundation of the other, and, necessary, to be doctrinally laid, as the* Basis *of that which is more commonly treated of. We should not*

not conceal the Truth *of God, nor the Eternity of his* Loving Kindneſs *herein from his dear Children*, Pſal. 40. 10. *For the Grace of the everlaſting Goſpel, in every of its Branches, ſweetly conſtrains the Saints to Holineſs, in Heart, Lip, and Life.*

From bleſſed Experience, I can ſay, thro' Grace, That the Diſplays of God's everlaſting Love, *in electing, adopting, and Settlement-Grace under the Holy Ghoſt's Witneſs of my particular Intereſt herein, have always been attended with ſtrong influential Drawings of my Soul unto God in Chriſt, and to an holy, humble, thankful Walk before him. If* the Lord, *the Spirit*, direct the Heart into the Love of God, 2 *Theſſ.* 3. 5. *as it's great, free, diſtinguiſhing, unchangeable, and eternal, how doth it attract the Soul, in a moment, into the ſwifteſt Motion after God, as the Center of all its Bleſſedneſs! The Holy Ghoſt's Light, in his ſaving Illuminations of his own, is always attended with the Holy*

Holy Ghost's Fire. If in his Light I see what room I had in God's Heart before the World was, and what rich Provision he then made for me, in his everlasting Covenant *with his Son; I straightway feel the Heat of this Bright Shine, melting my Soul down, to run into any Form for God. If I know* the Truth, *in its Light and Heat, Purity and Power,* as it is in Jesus, *Eph.* 4. 21. *my Heart is cast into the Truth I know, just as the melted Metal is cast into the Mold, and fashioned like it,* Rom. 6. 17.

As to the other Discourse, I have added, upon the Inheritance of the Sons of God; I have endeavour'd to declare, *what I* have seen and heard *under the Light and Teachings of the Blessed Spirit,* 1 John 1. 3. *The free, absolute, and irreversible Nature of the eternal Settlement of the Inheritance, upon the Sons of God, in Christ their Head, above the Consideration of the Fall, together with the way infinite Wisdom found out,*

for this Grace *to* reign thro' Righteouſneſs, by Jeſus Chriſt, *Rom.* 5. 21. *as a Saviour, in the Conveyance of it to the Children of God, notwithſtanding their being Sinners, has been to me both delightful and amazing. The majeſtick Glory of Divine Grace, I have ſeen herein, has made my Soul, with* Moſes, make haſte, bow down, and worſhip, *Exod.* 34. 8.

And now, dear Saints, what you ſhall ſee of the Truth of God in the following Pages, receive in the Love of it: What of Weakneſs appears, paſs by, and cover, in brotherly Kindneſs, remembring that theſe Lines are but the Chatterings of a Child, *that* cannot ſpeak, *Jer.* 1. 6.

I conclude, committing the whole to God; who alone can give the Increaſe *to the Labours of his People,* 1 Cor. 3. 6. *And if he will pleaſe to uſe the Hints I have given, to any of his Children, for their further Fellowſhip with the Truth;*

Truth; as it will be an Addition to my Joy, so I desire he may have all the Honour, who alone doth build the Temple of the Lord, *and is worthy to* bear the Glory, *Zech.* 6. 13.

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A DIS-

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DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

God's Act of Adoption.

MY Design in this Diſcourſe, being to ſpeak ſomewhat concerning the *Adoption of Children*, as it is a ſpecial gracious Privilege conferr'd upon the Elect of God: I ſhall

Firſt, Give a Definition of it, (according to the Meaſure of Light received)

Secondly,

Secondly, Endeavour to explain it. And,

Thirdly, Improve it.

The Definition take thus: Adoption, is a gracious, immanent, eternal Act of God's Sovereign Will: Whereby he has taken a certain Number of Perſons from among Mankind, as conſider'd in the pure Maſs, into a Supernatural, and Covenant-Relation of Children to himſelf, by Chriſt Jeſus, to the Praiſe of the Glory of his Grace.

In order to explain this Definition, I ſhall conſider it in its Parts, and ſeveral Branches. As,

Firſt, That Adoption is God's Act. 1 John iii. 1. *Behold what manner of Love the Father hath beſtow'd upon us, that we ſhould be called the Sons of God.* Adoption is here ſet forth as God's Act: 'Tis the [Father] ſaith he, hath beſtow'd this Privilege upon us. And the Lord himſelf declares this as his own Act, 2 *Cor.* 6. 18. *And I will be a Father unto you, and ye ſhall be my Sons and Daughters, ſaith the Lord Almighty.*

Almighty. We could no more bring ourſelves into this Grace-Relation of Children, than we could bring ourſelves into our natural Being. And therefore,

Secondly, Adoption is an Act of God's Sovereign Will, Eph. 1. 5. *Having predeſtinated us unto the Adoption of Children by Jeſus Chriſt to himſelf according to the good Pleaſure of his Will.* The good Pleaſure of God's Will, is the only Reaſon that's here aſſign'd, as the original Cauſe of this Relation.

Thirdly, Adoption is a gracious Act. 1 John 3. 1. *Behold what manner of* [*Love*] or what manner of Grace, the Father hath beſtowed upon us, in calling us Sons. The Grace of God, in its diſtinguiſhing Nature, differencing the Objects it fixt upon, from all the reſt of Mankind, in its immenſe Riches, conferring ſuch a high Dignity upon 'em, in its Sovereignty without Motives, in its Freeneſs without Conditions, and in the Eternity of its Duration, doth glorioufly ſhine

forth

forth in this Act of Adoption.

Fourthly, Adoption is an Immanent Act, Or, an Act of God's Will, that always abideth the ſame in God. We may ſay concerning it, as the Wiſe Man, Eccleſ. 3. 14. *I know that whatſoever God doth it ſhall be for ever: Nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it.* This is eminently true of what he doth in the Acts of his Grace, eſpecially his Immanent Acts: Which are ſo perfect that nothing can be put to 'em, nor any thing taken from 'em. No, though the Grace of Adoption, as a tranſient Act, doth paſs upon a Child of God in time, whereby he is brought into a viſibility of Sonſhip, 1. In Grace, And, 2. In Glory, Yet this puts nothing to this Immanent Act of God's Will, ſo as to make it to be what it was not before. And as nothing can be put to it, ſo nor can any thing be taken from it. It is not our *Receiving the Adoption* by Faith, *Gal.* 4. 5. and thereby entering into all the Immunities, and Grace-Privileges of the *Sons of God*, Joh. 1. 12.

nor

nor yet our receiving the *Adoption* in the open Glory of *the first Reſurrection*, When we ſhall enter into all the Glory-Privileges of this Relation, in the Sight of Men and Angels, *Rom.* 8. 23. 1 *Cor.* 15. 43. *Rev.* 20. 5. and 21. 1. that will take any thing from this Act of God's Will, ſo as to make it ceaſe to be what it is. For it is not our actual Enjoyment of all the glorious Fruits of adopting Love, that can take any thing from this Act of Adoption. It will abide the ſame to all the Ages of Eternity; which can't be ſaid of a bare Decree: As for Inſtance, God decreed to make the World, which when effected, the Decree, as a Decree, ceaſed: But it can't be ſo ſaid of an Immanent Act.

Fifthly, Adoption is not only an Act of God, an Act of his Sovereign Will, a Gracious, an Immanent, but it is alſo an Eternal Act: Or an Act that was from Everlaſting in Commencement, and will be to Everlaſting in Duration. Jer. 31. 3. *I have loved thee* (ſaith the Lord) *with an ever-*

everlaſting Love. 'Tis as true of Adopting as it is of electing Love. I ſhall inſiſt a little upon the Eternity of this Act. And,

It muſt needs be, That Adoption is an eternal Act, ſince God's Choſen had an Inheritance ſettled upon 'em in Chriſt, before the Foundation of the World. From which Poſition, two things will follow by undeniable Conſequence, as,

1. That in this very Act of Settlement, the Perſons on whom it was made, were thereby conſtituted Heirs before the World began. And,

2. That if they were made Heirs, they muſt needs be made Children before the World began.

But becauſe ſome Perſons may ſcruple the Truth of the Poſition, I ſhall endeavour to prove it.

And that God's Choſen had an Inheritance ſettled upon 'em in Chriſt, before the Foundation of the World, is evident, by what ſtands upon Record in the Sacred Scriptures. We may begin with that Text, 2 *Tim.* 1. 9.

Who

Who hath ſaved us, and called us with an holy Calling, not according to our Works, but according to his own Purpoſe and Grace which was given us in Chriſt Jeſus before the World began. Here's Grace ſaid to be given us in Chriſt before the World began: By which we may underſtand, 1. The Grace of Relation; and 2. All that comprehenſive Fullneſs of Grace that was ſettled upon us, as ſtanding in that Relation. Our Grace-Relation was firſt given; and then our Grace-Portion beſtow'd: And both before the World began.

Again, Another Scripture that bears Witneſs to this Truth, is, *Eph.* 1. 3, 4. *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual Bleſſings in heavenly Places in Chriſt: According as he hath choſen us in him before the Foundation of the World.* Which we may underſtand in a two-fold Reſpect, as,

1. That the Elect were then bleſt with all ſpiritual Bleſſings Comprehenſively; in that God himſelf did

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make over himſelf to them in Chriſt, as their eternal Portion. As ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, *My Fleſh and my Heart faileth: But God is the Strength of my Heart, and my Portion for ever*: Or my eternal Lot, *Pſal.* 73. 26. This was the great Bleſſing of the Covenant made with *Abraham*, the Father of the Faithful, as a Type of Chriſt and his Seed. *Gen.* 17. 7. *And I will eſtabliſh my Covenant*, &c. *To be a God unto thee and to thy Seed after thee.* This makes the *Pſalmiſt* pronounce God's People happy, with a *Yea, happy is that People whoſe God is the* LORD, *Pſal.* 144. 15. Becauſe this is the Origin of all our Bleſſedneſs, The Scource and Fountain whence all the Streams flow, The Sum Total, in which all particular Bleſſings are comprized.

2. The Elect were bleſt with all ſpiritual Bleſſings Diſtributively. God did, as it were, diſtribute, or lay out his own Riches of Grace and Glory (which were firſt ſettled comprehenſively) into ſo many ſeveral Parcels of Bleſſings;

Bleſſings; according to the Infinity of his *Wiſdom*, *Eph.* 1. 8. whereby he has made a full Proviſion in his *well-order'd Covenant*, to anſwer all the Deſigns of his Grace towards us, 2 *Sam.* 23. 5. and to *ſupply all our Wants*, Phil. 4. 19. in every State and Condition, thro' all thoſe Ways and Means *the Counſel of his Will* has ordain'd, *Eph.* 1. 11. And thus all ſpiritual Bleſſings in the Heavenlies, as a vaſt Inheritance, were ſettled upon the Elect in Chriſt, before the Foundation of the World. And God's eternal Act of Bleſſing [In] Chriſt Repreſentatively, is the Foundation of his Bleſſing us [Through] Chriſt communicatively. For by this Act of Settlement, all God's Riches of Grace and Glory, were ſtored up in Chriſt, as in an immenſe Treaſury; whence the Saints *receive* all Supplies, through Time and to Eternity, *Col.* 1. 19. *Joh.* 1. 16. And when we in Faith, do approach the Divine Throne, for *Grace to help in Time of Need*, Heb. 4. 16. We come to God as our Father, in believing Views of that full Provi-

Provision which he has made for us in Christ: And we don't ask for any new Blessings to be settled upon us, but only for the Communication of those Blessings [Thro'] Christ, which he hath already blest us with [In] Christ.

A *third* Scripture that bears Witness to this Truth, is *Titus* 1. 2. *In hope of eternal Life which God that cannot lie, promised before the World began.* Eternal Life is here said to be promised, that is, given by Promise; for *God gave* the Inheritance to Christ *by Promise*, as he did to *Abraham* his Type, *Gal.* 3. 18. Eternal Life then, which contains in it the whole of our Inheritance, both in Grace and Glory, was settled upon Christ, for the Elect, and upon the Elect in Christ, by an absolute Promise-Grant in the everlasting Covenant, by a God that cannot lie; even before the World began. Thus the Truth of this Position is abundantly evident: And as to the Consequences drawn from it, I think they are so clear they cannot be deny'd.

For,

For, if an Inheritance was ſettled upon the Elect before the World began, then they muſt be made Heirs before the World began: For Heirs and an Inheritance are Cor-relates. Again, if the Elect were made Heirs, they muſt needs be made Children before the World began: For Heirſhip depends upon Sonſhip: *If Children, then Heirs*, &c. *Rom.* 8. 17.

Again, it may be farther prov'd, That Adoption is an eternal Act, by the Order in which it ſtands; as it comes in between our being choſen in Chriſt, and our being bleſt in him. For when the Apoſtle had ſet forth our Inheritance in the Matter of it, as it lies in all ſpiritual Bleſſings, *Eph.* 1. 3. And alſo in the Time of its Beſtowment, which was before the Foundation of the World, according as we were choſen in Chriſt, *Ver.* 4. he next proceeds to ſhew the Manner of its Se tlement upon us, and that is as we were Children, *Ver.* 5. [*Having*] *Predeſtinated us unto the Adop-*

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tion of Children. We were bleſt as being adopted.

This Predeſtination is an Immanent Act of God's Will; whereby he has abſolutely determin'd us unto, or into the Adoption of Children, in this Reſolution of his Divine Mind, *I will be unto you a Father, and ye ſhall be my Sons and Daughters*, 2 Cor. 6. 18. Which predeſtinating Act of his Will, did give an immediate Being to this Relation, to, and in the Mind of God, and a remote Being unto it, or a Being of Futurity, in reſpect unto Men. No ſooner did this Act paſs in the Divine Mind, *I will be unto you a Father*; but the immediate Effect of it was, our being his *Sons and Daughters*: For this Act of God's Will, is the very Eſſence of Adoption. It was done to God ſecretly, as an Immanent Act from Eternity; as the Foundation of doing it to Men openly, as a tranſient Act in Time.

Once more, Adoption may be further evinced to be an eternal Act, in that the Elect not only ſuſtain the Rela-

Relation of Sons in the Mind of God; but also bear the Name of Sons in the Word of God, before the Spirit is sent into their Hearts crying, Abba, Father. *Gal.* 4. 6. *And because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son,* &c. Their Relation is not only antecedent to the sending of the Spirit; but it is also a Cause of his being sent: As is plain from this *Galatian* Text. The Elect are also called the Children of God, even before Christ died to *gather 'em together* in one. *John* 11. 52. Because they never lost their eternal Relation, though *scattered abroad* in the Fall. Yea, on this Account they are likewise stiled Children, even before the Son of God assumed their Nature to set them free: *Heb.* 2. 14. *Forasmuch then as the Children are Partakers of Flesh and Blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.* And again, they are called the Sons of God, before their gathering to Christ by regenerating, and converting Grace: *Isa.* 43. 6. *I will say to the North, Give up; and to the*

the South, Keep not back: bring my Sons from far, and my Daughters from the Ends of the Earth. We may underſtand theſe Words, 1. Literally: And ſo they are a Prophecy of the *Jews* Return from Captivity, and Converſion to Chriſt. Whence we may obſerve, That the Royal Word of Command comes forth for their Deliverance, upon this bottom of their being the Sons of God ſecretly, in order to make them the Sons of God openly, by conferring on them the Privileges of this Relation in the View of all the World. 2. We may take theſe Words ſpiritually: And ſo they reſpect the Elect of God among the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*; And their gathering to Chriſt by efficacious Grace. And thus the Royal Command comes forth for all Enemies to deliver 'em up, whether Sin, Satan, Law, or Conſcience; when the Lord, the Spirit comes commiſſion'd from the Father and Chriſt, to bring theſe Sons, upon the bottom of their antecedent Relation, out of the Bondage of

of a Nature-State, in which they are *afar off*, into a State of Freedom and influential Nearneſs, by Faith in *the Blood of Chriſt*, Eph. 2. 13. by which they are taken into the viſible number of the *Sons of God*; and have a pleadable Right to all the Privileges of this Relation; as being *no more Strangers, but Fellow-citizens with the Saints, and of the Houſhold of God*, Eph. 2. 19. And God's Time-Act of Adoption, is but as it were a Copy taken from the Original of his eternal Act.

Thus I have ſhewn that Adoption is an eternal Act: 1. From the Nature of the Act itſelf. 2. From the Conſequents of it, which are, 1. That the Elect hereupon ſuſtain the Relation of Sons in the Word of God. And 2. That they bear the Name of Sons in the Mind of God, before the Spirit is ſent into their Hearts, Yea, before Chriſt died for 'em; And ſo, before their being gather'd to him by Faith: As is clear from this Text in *Iſaiah*, which I laſt inſiſted on; and ſhould

now leave, but that ſome, perhaps, may object, and ſay,

Objection. That this Text affords no clear Proof for the Elect being called the Sons of God before their Converſion to Chriſt: Becauſe in the very next Verſe, as ſoon as the Lord had ſaid, *Bring my Sons from far*, it follows, *Even every one that is called by my Name*, Iſa. 43. 7. From whence the Objector may conclude, that the Perſons here ſtyl'd Sons, are none but ſuch that have paſs'd under a ſaving Work of the Spirit in their Hearts.

Anſwer. In Anſwer to which I do readily grant, that the Perſons here denominated Sons, are all ſuch, and none but ſuch that are called by God's Name: And yet I don't think, that this will in the leaſt invalidate my Argument for eternal Adoption. I ſhall therefore endeavour to remove this Objection, by ſhewing

In what Senſe calling by God's Name, creating for his Glory, &c. in the *ſeventh Verſe* of this *forty-third* of *Iſaiah*, may be underſtood, agreeably with

with God's eternal Act of Adoption. But before I come to open the ſeveral Phraſes herein, I ſhall hint ſomething concerning the Extenſiveneſs of the Divine Command, conſiſtent with other Scriptures, and alſo with the Senſe I have given of the former Verſe.

Bring my Sons from far, ſays God, *and my Daughters from the ends of the Earth: Even every one that is called by my Name.* This Divine Command extends itſelf to every Son of God, and ſecures his being brought home to his Father's Houſe. Our Father will not leave one of his Children to periſh in the diſtant State of Nature. For having *given 'em* to Chriſt, he expects to have 'em all brought ſafe home at laſt: As our Lord witneſſeth, *John* 6. 39. *And this is the Father's Will which hath ſent me, that of all which he hath given me, I ſhould loſe nothing, but ſhould raiſe it up again at the laſt Day.* Our Lord *receiv'd Commandment of* his *Father* to *lay down his Life for the Sheep*; that ſo he might loſe none, *John* 10. 18. And becauſe it was both His and his Father's Will, he there-

fore makes Requeſt for their being brought home, even all of 'em. *John* 17. 20, 21. *Neither pray I for theſe alone, but for them alſo which ſhall believe on me through their Word: That they* [*All*] *may be one*, (or gather'd into one) *as thou Father art in me, and I in thee; that they alſo may be one in us.* And not only did our Lord pray to his Father who *always* heard him, *John* 11. 42. for every Child of his, that it might be brought home according to his Will: But he alſo declares a Neceſſity was upon him concerning this thing, *John* 10. 16. *And other Sheep I have which are not of this Fold: Them alſo I* [*Muſt*] *bring.* And doubtleſs one Reaſon why our Lord ſays, *I muſt bring* 'em, was, becauſe it was his *Father's Will*, which he *came down from Heaven* on purpoſe to fulfil, *John* 6. 38. And thus when he was to gather the *Samaritan* Woman, and bring her nigh by efficacious Grace, it's ſaid, *John* 4. 4. *He muſt needs go through* Samaria. This being the Will of his Father, which to do was his *Meat*,

Meat, as himſelf ſays, ver. 34. And thus the *Apoſtle Peter*, *The Lord is Long-ſuffering to us-ward, not willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to Repentance*, 2 Pet. 3. 9. I apprehend that the whole Election of Grace is intended in theſe Words [*Us-ward*]. And ſo, his not willing that any ſhould periſh, is, that any of [Us] ſhould periſh, but that all of [Us] ſhould come to Repentance: Which is the very Language of this Text in *Iſaiah*. *Bring* 'em nigh, ſaith God, *even every one that's called by my Name*. From whence we may learn, That every one that is a Child of God by adopting Grace ſecretly, ſhall certainly in God's own Way and Time, be brought nigh, and made a Child of God openly *by Faith in Chriſt Jeſus* Here, and by Kingdom-Glory Hereafter, *Gal.* 3. 26. *Rev.* 21. 7.

I ſhall now take a little Notice of what is intended by the Sons of God being ſaid, To be called by his Name, in the *ſeventh Verſe* of this *forty-third* of *Iſaiah*. And I humbly conceive,

that hereby in the primary Senſe of it, we are to underſtand, That Act of God's Will, whereby he has call'd 'em [His] People, in the Counſel-Language that paſs'd, and Covenant-Tranſactions which were made, between his three glorious Perſons, concerning the whole Body of the Elect before the World began.

And hence it is that they are called [His] People in his own Word, even before Chriſt dy'd to redeem 'em: (and ſo before they could be made the Sons of God by Faith, as a Fruit of Chriſt's Redemption:) which we may ſee in that Meſſage the Angel brought to *Joſeph*, concerning the Virgin *Mary*, when he came to acquaint him what manner of Child ſhe ſhould bring forth, and what his Name ſhould be, *Mat.* 1. 21. *Thou ſhalt call his Name Jeſus: For he ſhall ſave* [*His*] *People from their Sins.* And as they are called His People, before our great High-Prieſt offer'd up himſelf a Sacrifice in their room and ſtead: ſo alſo before the Holy Spirit is ſent into their Hearts,

Hearts, to ſubdue their ſtubborn Wills, and bring 'em into a willing Subjection to Chriſt's kingly Sceptre, by his own creating Power. As we may ſee in that Promiſe of the Father made to Chriſt, *Pſ.*110. 3. [*Thy*] *People ſhall be willing in the Day of thy Power.* Thus they are called by God's Name, in his Counſel and Covenant, in Prophecy and Promiſe concerning 'em, upon the bottom of his eternal Choice and Foreknowledge of 'em as his [Own], 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. before effectual Grace reacheth their Hearts. So that here, *every one that is called by my Name*, is as much as if the Lord ſhould ſay, every one that I have a ſpecial Right to and Propriety in. But,

I proceed to the *latter Part* of the *Verſe*, which gives us the Reaſon why the Command for gathering, extends itſelf to every one that's called by God's Name: *For I have created him for my Glory, I have Form'd him, yea, I have Made him*, Iſa. 43. 7.

I have [*Created*] *him for my Glory*, is as much as if the Lord ſhould ſay,

I have given him his Being in the State of Creatureſhip, in Subſerviency to all the ends of my Glory, in my vaſt Deſigns concerning him: And for this Reaſon he muſt be gathered from the Eaſt and Weſt.

I have [*Formed*] *him*, as a *Veſſel of Honour*, in his Grace-Relation and Glory-Deſignation. And having thus *prepar'd him unto Glory*, Rom. 9. 21, 23. he muſt be brought from the North and from the South; *for my Counſel ſhall ſtand, and I will do all my Pleaſure*, Iſa. 46. 10.

Yea (ſays God) *I have* [*Made*] *him*, or, I have given him already his Grace, and Glory-being in my own Son Repreſentatively: *In whom it has pleaſed* me *that all fullneſs ſhould dwell*, Col. 1. 19. a fulneſs for Repreſentation, as well as a fulneſs for Communication. I have [Made] him in the Upper-fall Acts of my Grace, in my own Son, his Head, Pattern, and Exemplar. Yea, I have [Made] him in the Under-fall Acts of my Grace to: For though he has *deſtroy'd himſelf* by Sin, *Hoſ.* 13. 9. yet,

I have

I have [Made] him in his glorious Head, as a Saviour: Whom I have *made unto him Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification and Redemption*, 1 Cor. 1. 30. So that, upon the bottom of what I have [Made] him, in all the Acts of my Grace concerning him, he muſt be brought from far; that this Repreſentative-Life, which he now has in Chriſt his Head, may become a communicated Life, and enjoy'd in his own Perſon by a Derivation out of the communicable Fulneſs of my Son.

And thus I humbly conceive, That the Elect may be as truly ſaid, to be [Made] in Chriſt, when he was conſtituted their *Common-Head*, and *Root*; as the Children of the *Firſt Adam* may be ſaid to be [Made] in him, when he came out of his Maker's Hand in the Capacity of a Common Perſon.

What *Adam* then was, that all Men were who were in him: And it is from this their being in him radically, and ſeminally, as the Life of the Branch is in its Root, or the Plant in

its Seed, that they derive both his *Natural* and corrupt Image, by a Communication of Influence: Even as the Root communicates Life and Sap to the Branches. *And as we have born the Image of the Earthy, we shall also bear the Image of the Heavenly*, 1 Cor. 15. 48, 49.

The Fountain-cause of our bearing *Adam*'s Image, was our Union to him, when we were representatively made in him. So, our bearing the Image of the Heavenly, is secured by that Union we had to the Person of Christ, when representatively made in him; who was constituted our Head and Root *from everlasting*, *Prov.* 8. 23. And a Representative-Being in each of these Heads, doth not only secure, but is also antecedent unto, that personal Being, which is from them derived to each of their respective Seeds, in Nature, or Grace.

Thus I have endeavoured to remove the Objection, by explaining the Phrases in the *seventh Verse* of the

the *forty-third* of *Iſaiah*, according to what I apprehend, in the primary Senſe of 'em, to be intended, in the Elect being ſaid, to be called by God's Name, created for his Glory, formed and made even before their gathering to Chriſt by converting Grace: All which do very well agree with God's eternal Act of Adoption, from whence they are called Sons, in the precedent Verſe: Which was my firſt Aſſertion. But, to return from this Digreſſion. In the *next* Place

I proceed to a further opening of the Definition I gave of God's Act of Adoption. And having already gone through the *firſt Part* of it, which more peculiarly reſpects the Act itſelf; I now come to the *ſecond Part*, the immediate Effect of that Act. Which is,

That God, by this Act of Adoption, did take a certain Number of Perſons from among Mankind, as conſider'd in the pure Maſs, in-

to a ſupernatural, and Covenant Relation of Children to himſelf, by Chriſt Jeſus, to the Praiſe of the Glory of his Grace. In which may be conſider'd,

Firſt, That this Relation into which we are taken by Adoption, is, a Supernatural and Covenant-Relation: It is a Relation unto God by Grace, which is far ſuperior unto that we had by Nature.

We had, indeed, a natural Relation to God as his Children by Creation, in our Head *Adam*: Who upon this Account is called *the Son of God*, Luke 3. 38. But this was a Privilege common to all his Poſterity, as ſaith the *Apoſtle*, Acts 17. 26. *And hath made of one Blood all Nations of Men*, &c. *for we are his Offspring*, Ver. 28. And there was an Honour in this natural Relation to God as a Father: For it did beſpeak the noble Extract of Man, as endow'd with a rational Soul, of which God was the immediate Parent,

rent, when *he breathed into Man the Breath of Lives, and Man became a living Soul*, Gen. 2. 7. Which Soul of his, as it is a Diſcourſive, Immaterial, and Immortal Spirit, capable of enjoying, and glorifying his Creator, and accordingly filled with a Perfection of moral Rectitude, was made *in the Image of God*, Gen. 1. 27. and did bear a Reſemblance of its Maker, both in its Eſſence and Qualities. Thus Man was made in the Image of God; or in the Likeneſs of Chriſt; who is expreſly ſtyl'd *God's Image*, Col. 1. 15. Chriſt, as Mediator, was *ſet up from everlaſting*, Prov. 8. 23. in God's Counſel and Covenant, as the Head of the Creation; in whom all the Perfections of God did meet; that ſo in him might ſhine forth a perfect Image, or Repreſentation of God, in all his Perfections, to all ſorts of Creatures, by all ſorts of Ways, in all their various Conditions, and deſigned Ends. And Chriſt was the original

original Draught, after which Man, as a little Picture, was drawn: ſo as that, there was more of the Image of God to be ſeen in Man, than in all the reſt of the Creation. And as we had a natural Relation to God in *Adam*, and did bear a natural Image, ſo likewiſe we had a natural Inheritance; which was God, as the God of Nature, to be enjoy'd through the Creatures in this lower World. For *the Earth has he given to the Sons of Men*, Pſal. 115. 16. which was eminently true of 'em as they ſtood in their Head *Adam*, When he was *crown'd with Glory and Honour*, made Lord of the Univerſe, all Creatures being *put under his Feet*, Pſal. 8. 5, 6. Thus there was a Glory in the natural Relation: But when compar'd with the ſupernatural, we may ſay of it, as the *Apoſtle* doth of the Law, when compar'd with the Goſpel, *That which was made glorious, had no Glory in this reſpect, by reaſon of the Glory that excelleth*, 2 Cor. 3. 10.

What

What Glory was there in the natural Relation to God, as the God of Nature, if compar'd with the excelling Glory of a ſupernatural Relation to him, as the God of all Grace! What Glory was there in the natural Image, if compar'd with the outſhining Glory of that ſpiritual Image, which we bear as ſtanding in a ſupernatural Relation! Again, what Glory was there in the natural Inheritance, which lay in earthly Bleſſings, if compar'd with our ſupernatural Inheritance, which lies in all ſpiritual Bleſſings in the Heavenlies! Surely the brightneſs of the Firſt Relation, muſt needs loſe its Luſtre, when once the ſuperexcellent Glory of the Second appears! And tho' our Eyes are not yet Strong enough, ſtedfaſtly to behold the brightneſs of God's Grace, which illuſtrioufly Shines forth in this ſupernatural Relation; yet a glimpſe of its Glory is enough to fill us with Admiration, at thoſe *Great Things* the Lord did for us, 1 *Sam.* 12. 24. when he took us into *the Family* of Heaven, in his adopting Act of Grace, *Eph.* 2. 19.

by

by which he has *called us Sons*, 1 *Joh.* 3. 1. or made us to ſuſtain this Relation of Children. Which I call Supernatural, 1. With Reſpect to the Relation itſelf conferred. 2. With Reſpect unto thoſe Springs of Favour from whence it was beſtow'd upon us. And 3. With Reſpect to the inſeperable Conſequents of it.

It's Supernatural with Reſpect to the Relation itſelf, Becauſe every Way above Nature; or what was meet for the Creator to beſtow, even in the higheſt Diſpenſations of his Kindneſs in a natural Way, towards perfect natural Man. God communicates of himſelf to all his Creatures, agreeably to the Relation they ſtand in to him. And having *choſen* a Remnant in his Son, unto eternal Glory, in order to *Bleſs* them with this ſupernatural Inheritance, he took them into a ſupernatural Relation. *Eph.* 1. 3, 4, 5.

It's ſupernatural, with Reſpect to the Springs of Favour whence it flows. 'Twas *great Love* that beſtow'd this great Relation, *Eph.* 2. 4. a Love far higher

higher than Creation-Love. So great that it could not have *enter'd into the Heart* of a Creature to conceive ſuch a Thing, 1 *Cor.* 2. 9. if God who is great in Grace, had not conceiv'd it in his own Heart, and *reveal'd* it in his Word and *by his Spirit*, *ver.* 10. 'Twas Free-Love, or princely Grace, that took no Motives from the Creature in the beſtowment of it. God acted herein every Way like a Sovereign, *according to the good Pleaſure of his Will*, *Eph.* 1. 5. Yea, it was diſtinguiſhing Love: God did not ſo love all the World, as to Adopt 'em for his Children. No, it's a ſpecial Privilege that none but *the Elect* ſhare in, 1 *Pet.* 2. 9.

It's Supernatural alſo, as to the inſeperable Conſequents of it: Which are, an indefeaſible Right unto, and a compleat Enjoyment of the heavenly Inheritance. *Adoption and Glory* go together, *Rom.* 9. 4. And as it is a Supernatural, ſo alſo a Covenant-Relation that we are taken into by Adoption.

This

This Relation, was not only beſtow'd upon us in the immanent Act of God's Will, but alſo in his everlaſting Covenant with his Son. God not only took up this Reſolution in his Mind, *I will be unto them a Father, and they ſhall be my Sons and Daughters*, 2 *Cor.* 6. 18. but he likewiſe paſs'd this Act of his Will into a Covenant-Promiſe, made to Chriſt as the Head and Repreſentative of his People. And hence this Promiſe comes forth to us in the Goſpel as a Tranſcript from that Original. In the next Place, we may obſerve:

Secondly, That it was a certain Number of Perſons from among Mankind, which were taken into this Relation. *For whom he did Foreknow, them he did Predeſtinate*, &c. *Rom.* viii. 29. Here is the determinate Number expreſt, by their being ſaid, to be [Foreknown]: Which was by God's eternal Choice of 'em *in Chriſt*, *Eph.* 1. 4. 1 *King* 8. 53. *ſeperating* them from the World, ſetting them apart for himſelf, as *his own peculiar Treaſure*; *Pſal.* 135.

135. 4. both in the certainty of their Number, and individuation of their Perſons. And it was none but thoſe whom God thus Foreknew, which he did *Predeſtinate to be conform'd unto the Image of his Son*, *Rom.* 8. 29. 1. In a ſameneſs of Relation. 2. In a ſameneſs of Diſpoſition. And 3. In a ſameneſs of Inheritance. And as it was a certain Number of Perſons, that were taken into this Relation, ſo theſe were taken from among Mankind. And therefore ſays *the Apoſtle*, *Behold, what manner of Love the Father hath beſtowed upon us*, 1 *John* 3. 1. Us the [Choſen] Men, and not others, who were of the ſame Nature with us: Us [Men] and not Angels, tho' they are of a ſuperior Make: For tho' the Angels are *the Sons of God* by Creation, *Job* 38. 7. yet they are not the Sons of God by Adoption; ſo that in this reſpect we ſtand in a nearer Relation to God, than the very Angels in Heaven. Again,

Thirdly, Theſe Perſons were conſider'd in the pure Maſs, when this Act of

of Adoption fixt upon 'em. For as they were Choſen, ſo they were Adopted; and both antecedent to their being bleſt in the Grace-part of the Covenant; which was the Foundation of their being Bleſt in the Redemption part of it. When I ſay the Grace-part of the Covenant, I intend the upper-moſt Settlement of *all ſpiritual Bleſſings* upon us *in Chriſt* our Head, *Eph.* 1. 3, 4, 5, 6. which merely ſprang from Sovereign Love, princely Grace, or Favour. Not but that the Redemption-part of it, which reſpected the conveyance of all theſe Bleſſings *through* Chriſt as a Saviour, was of Free-Grace to Us, *ver.* 7. too: But then 'twas Grace, ſhewing forth its Glory, and extending its Riches, in a Way of *Mercy*, Pity and Compaſſion, *Eph.* 2. 4, 5. *Iſa.* 49. 6. reſpecting the Creature as miſerable. So that for Diſtinction Sake, I think we may ſay, the Grace-part, and the Redemption-part of the Covenant, as we reſpect the ſame *everlaſting Covenant* in its ſeveral Branches. Adoption was an upper-

fall

fall Act of Grace, an earlier Act than the Act of Juſtification, altho' both were from Eternity. Indeed ſtrictly ſpeaking, there is no Firſt nor Second with God, whoſe vaſt Mind comprehends all Things at once. But we Creatures, muſt ſpeak of his Acts in a ſucceſſive Order, as our Capacities can take them in. And ſo one Act was before another, in Order of Nature at leaſt, if not of Time. All Acts reſpect their proper Objects; and there needed no more than the [Being] of the Creature, for an Act of Adoption to paſs upon it. We were far enough off even in the State of Creature-ſhip, for adopting Grace to bring us nigh. Low enough even in the Heights of a natural Relation, for this Grace to raiſe us unto the tranſcendent Dignity of that which is Supernatural. Thus the Act of Adoption reſpects the Creature merely as ſuch: But the Act of Juſtification, did not only pre-ſuppoſe the Being, but alſo the [Fall] of the Creature. And, that Adoption did fix upon the Creature as conſider'd Pure, will further appear, if we conſider.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, That Chriſt Jeſus was the Pattern by which God did proceed in this Act of Adoption: *Having predeſtinated us unto the Adoption of Children by Chriſt Jeſus*, Eph. 1. 5. It was by Chriſt, 1. As the Relation-Pattern. 2. By him, as the Conveyor of Relation-Privileges.

1*ſt*, It was by Chriſt, as the Relation-Pattern. Our Lord Chriſt is the Son of God in a two-fold Reſpect. As,

1. In his Divine Nature, by his eternal Generation of the Father. And ſo he is God's [Own] Son; the Son of his Nature: His [Only] begotten Son: For in this Reſpect God hath no Son but him; who is co-equal, co-eſſential, and co-eternal with his Father. And as thus conſider'd, his Relation is not the Pattern of ours. No, this is ſo high that it's incommunicable to any Creature; and peculiar to the Second Perſon in God; whoſe Name and Nature is as ineffable as the Father's, *Prov.* 30. 4. *What is his Name, and what*

what is his Son's Name if thou canſt tell?

2. Our Lord Chriſt is not only the Son of God in his Divine Nature, as Second Perſon in the Glorious Trinity; but he is alſo the Son of God, as Mediator, in his Human Nature. In the firſt Senſe he is God's Natural, in the ſecond, (as I humbly conceive) his Adopted Son. Nor doth this make two Sons in the Perſon of the Mediator: for as his Perſon is but One, ſo he is but One Son of God; and yet he is the Son of God in theſe two Reſpects, anſwerable unto his two diſtinct Natures. Which to me is evident from the *firſt Chapter* to the *Hebrews*. The *Apoſtle*'s Intent in this *Epiſtle*, is, to ſet forth the tranſcendent Glory of the Goſpel above that of the Law: And he does it *firſt*, by ſetting forth the Dignity of its prime Miniſter. *God* (ſaith he) *who at ſundry times, and in divers manners ſpake in times paſt unto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath in theſe laſt Days ſpoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed Heir of all things,*

things, by whom alſo he made the Worlds. Who being the Brightneſs of his Glory, and the expreſs Image of his Perſon, and upholding all things by the Word of his Power, when he had by himſelf purged our Sins, ſat down on the right Hand of the Majeſty on High. Heb. 1. 1, 2, 3, Chriſt is here ſet forth as the Son of God, in the two reſpects mentioned. As,

1. In his Divine Sonſhip, by his being ſaid to be, *The Brightneſs of his Father's Glory, the expreſs Image of his Perſon*, and to *uphold all things by the Word of his Power*. And,

2. His Adoptive Sonſhip, is as evidently intended, in that this Son of God is ſaid to be, *The Appointed Heir of all things*: Which can't be predicated of him as the Second Perſon in God: For ſo conſidered, he had an equal and eſſential Right to all things with his Father. And therefore his Covenant Sonſhip muſt be intended; which was in order to a Covenant-Appointment of him as Heir of all things. Again, Chriſt's Adoptive Son-

ſhip

hip is further ſet forth, *Ver.* 5. *I will e unto him a Father, and he ſhall be unto me a Son.* Chriſt's Divine Filiation an't be here meant: for that is by Neceſſity of Nature, but this by an Act of the Divine Will. It's the Language of Covenant-Grace, conſtituting this Covenant-Relation. And o it runs, firſt to him the Head, *I will e his Father, and he ſhall be my Son,* Chron. 17. 13. And then to us the Members in him, *I will be unto You a Father, and Ye ſhall be my Sons and Daughters, ſaith the Lord Almighty,* Cor. 6. 18. Thus it appears, That Chriſt's Relation, in this reſpect, and Ours is the ſame for [Kind]; in that hey both flow from the ſame Covenant-Grant, and alſo in that both Chriſt and we partake of the ſame Spirit of Adoption: And therefore God is ſaid, To *ſend the Spirit of his on into our Hearts, crying, Abba Father*, Gal. 4. 6. We are *anointed* with he ſame *Oyl of Gladneſs*, Pſal. 45. 7. Which Words doubtleſs intend, in one enſe of 'em, the pouring out of the Spirit

Spirit as a Comforter, to Witneſs Relation, and enable us to cry, *Abba Father.* And thus it was graciouſly promiſed in the Covenant, and foretold of Chriſt, *Pſal.* 89. 26. *He ſhall cry unto me, my Father, my God, and the Rock of my Salvation.* And the Grace of this Promiſe, not only reſpects the Head, but it reacheth to the Members alſo: For concerning them the Lord ſays, *Thou ſhalt call me my Father, and ſhalt not turn away from me,* Jer. 3. 19. For ſo run all the New Covenant-Promiſes, to *David, and to his Seed for evermore,* Pſal. 18. 50.

And as our Lord Chriſt, doth ſtand in this Adoptive-Relation upon the bottom of abſolute Grace, ſo this Act of Grace was primarily fixt upon his Perſon, as God-Man, peculiarly reſpecting his Man-Nature, when he was *ſet up from everlaſting,* Prov. 8. 23. in Counſel and Covenant, as the great Mediator and *Head of the Church,* *Eph.* 5. 23. which was antecedent to his being *the Saviour of the Body.* For though his being *Declared to be the Son*

of

f God by his Reſurrection, Rom. 1. 4. nd glorious Exaltation at the Right-Hand of the Father, was given him s his Due, upon his being *Obedient nto Death*, as the Saviour of the Bo-ly, *Phil.* 2. 8, 9. yet this glorious Re-tion, in this Branch of it whereof I ow ſpeak, with all the Privileges hereof, was originally ſettled by mere race upon his Perſon, as Head of the hurch. And thus he was the Rela-on-Pattern; for as God's Act of A-option did fix upon the Perſon of hriſt, as Head, ſo upon our Perſons, the pure Maſs, as Members of that ead.

Again, it will further appear, that hriſt was the Pattern by which God d proceed in this Act of Adoption, we conſider ſome *Scriptures* where hriſt is ſet forth as ſtanding in a ſame-eſs of Relation with, and yet in a ranſcendency of Glory above us. e may begin with *Rom.* 8. 29. *For om he did foreknow, he alſo did pre-ſtinate to be conformed to the Image of s Son, that he might be the Firſt-born*

among many Brethren. Here is, firſt, A ſameneſs of Relation, in that the Elect are ſaid to be Chriſt's [Brethren]: As they are alſo ſtiled, Heb. 2. 12. *I will declare thy Name unto my Brethren.* And Chriſt is *not aſhamed* to own us in this Relation, *ver.* 11. *For both he that ſanctifieth, and they who are ſanctified, are all of One: For which cauſe he is not aſhamed to call them Brethren.* Chriſt, and we have one and the ſame Father, ſprang from one and the ſame Fountain of pure Grace; and were deſign'd for one and the ſame Glory: And for this Cauſe he is not aſhamed to own us.

Again, this ſameneſs of Relation doth further appear, in that Chriſt, in that *Roman* Text, is ſaid to be the [Firſt-born] among many Brethren. And thus he is called *God's Firſt-born, Pſal.* 89. 27. and his *Firſt-begotten, Heb.* 1. 6. which Phraſe doth neceſſarily imply, that there are other Sons that ſtand in the ſame Relation with him. For there can be no Firſt, where there is not a Second, *&c.* And therefore

therefore when Chriſt's Divine Sonſhip is intended, in which he ſtands [Alone] in a Relation infinitely above all the Creatures, he is never ſet forth by this Character of the [Firſt] but always by that of the [Only] begotten Son of God, *John* 1. 14. 18. *chap.* 3. 16. 18. And as this Style of Firſt-born, doth neceſſarily imply, that there are others that ſtand in the ſame Relation with him; ſo it doth as plainly denote, that Tranſcendency of Glory which he hath above them. For, as the Firſt-born, he's the Head of the Family, The Pattern to which all the younger Brethren are conform'd, both in Relation, Diſpoſition and Inheritance.

Again, this will further appear, if we look into the *Twentieth* of *John*, where our Lord, when riſen from the Dead, and full of Thoughts about his own Glory, did yet own his Diſciples as his Brethren. *Ver.* 17. *Go to my Brethren, and ſay unto them, I aſcend unto my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.* 'Tis as if he ſhould

ſay, " Go tell my Brethren, that I am
" indeed Riſen from the Dead, and
" juſt entering into my Glory; but I
" don't forget my Relation to them
" as I am their Brother. I own them
" for my Brethren ſtill, though all
" of them have forſaken, and one de-
" ny'd me: Yet, ſay unto them, I aſ-
" cend unto my Father and your Fa-
" ther, to my God and your God: You
" and I have one and the ſame Father;
" are lov'd with the ſame Love, and
" Bleſt in the ſame Covenant, and
" therefore I aſcend to [Your] Father,
" as well as my Father, to [Your] God,
" as well as my God: And yet he is
" firſt [My] Father, and [My] God,
" as I am his Firſt-born Son, and your
" Head, and then he is [Your] Father,
" and [Your] God, as you are his
" younger Children, and my Mem-
" bers. The Father *hath loved* You
" *as he hath loved Me*, *John* 17. 23.
" with the ſame Love for [Kind] tho'
" not in the ſame [Degree]. He lo-
" ved me firſt, ſo as to make me the
" Firſt-born and Head of the Family:

" And

" And then he loved you next, ſo as " to make you my younger Brethren. " His Love to you, is but an overflow " of his Love to me: And (as if he " ſhould further ſay), herein lies your " Security, in that he is firſt my Fa- " ther and my God in Covenant, and " then your Father and your God in " me by the ſame Covenant; ſo that " you can never Loſe your Relation " and Intereſt, becauſe *the Covenant* " *ſtands faſt with* me *for ever. Pſal.* " 89. 28. And ſo long as it ſtands faſt " with me, ſo long it will ſtand " faſt with you; becauſe it ſtands faſt " with me [For] you, and ſo with " you [In] me."

And hence it is that we can draw nigh to God *with Boldneſs*, ſince he is the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and ſo our God and Father in him, *Eph.* 3. 14. The Saints of old, dealt with God as a Covenant-God, and put up their Supplications to him as *the God and Father of Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob*, 1 *Chron.* 29. 18. whoſe Seed they were: For God did make

Covenant with them, and their Seed in them, *Gen.* 17. 7. as Types of that everlaſting Covenant that was made with Chriſt and his Seed. And the Believers that were among them then, did look thro' the Type to Chriſt the great Antitype: But yet they did not ſee him with that Clearneſs, and in that unvail'd Glory, which the Saints now do, 2 *Cor.* 3. 13, 18. and therefore they went to God, in the Relation and Intereſt of their Father *Abraham.* Whereas we, in the Advance of New-Teſtament Faith, draw nigh to God, as *the God and Father of Chriſt*, *Eph.* 1. 3. and ſo our God and Father in him; who was the Pattern by which God did proceed in all the wondrous Grace beſtow'd on us. But

Secondly, It was by Chriſt, alſo, as the Conveyer of Relation-Privileges, Which are oft put for the Relation itſelf. If we view the Sons of God as *ſcatter'd Abroad* in the Fall, they look very unlike his Children, *John* 11. 52. Yea, by Nature, as conſider'd in *Adam*, and under a broken Law, they were

Children

Children of Wrath even as others, Eph. 2. 3. deservedly, tho' not designedly. They were under the same declarative Wrath in the Sentence of the Law with others, as it ours'd every Transgressor. But Christ taking their Law-place, putting himself in their Room and Stead, he endured its Penalty, as the just desert of their Sin; satisfied Justice, and Redeemed them from the Curse of the Law, *that they might receive the Adoption of Sons, Gal.* 4. 5. or the open Admittance into all the Privileges of this Relation. But notwithstanding the Sons of God were, all at once, *Redeemed* by Christ *from the Curse of the Law*, by his being *made a Curse for* them, *ch.* 3. 13. yet still while they lye here and there in the distant State of Nature, there is no apparent Difference between them and others. They are *without Christ, Aliens from the Covenants of Promise, having no Hope, and without God in the World, Eph.* 2. 12. Estranged from him and Haters of him. And as such, there is an absolute necessity for the Application of Christ's Redemption by

his Holy Spirit; that so these Strangers might become *Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Houshold of God, Ver.* 19. *i. e.* his visible Houshold. For while the Elect of God remain in Unregeneracy, their open State by Nature, as related to *Adam*, is a State of Alienation and Wrath; tho' at the same Time their secret State by Grace, in Christ, is a State of Nearness to God, and perfect Freedom from all Guilt and Curse. For God's chosen, even while in a State of Nature, are not one Moment under his real Wrath, or the Affection of Wrath in his Heart; tho' they are under the Declaration of Wrath in *the Curse of the Law, Gal.* 3. 10. as it sets forth the just Desert of every Transgression. And as such it is impossible for them either to know, or enjoy the Privileges of their high Relation, until they are brought *nigh by the Blood of Christ, Eph.* 2. 13. under the saving Operations of the Holy Ghost, working Faith in their Hearts, enabling them to *lay Hold* on Christ, *Heb.* 6. 18. and *eternal Life in* him.

1 *John*

1 *John* 5. 11. And to plead their Freedom by *the Son*, *John* 8. 36. as ſuch that are *paſſed from Death to Life*, *Ch.* 5. 24. or from an open State of Wrath under the Law, into a viſible State of Favour, and full Salvation, under the Declarations of Grace in Chriſt, whither they have fled for Refuge, and are Safe: When it is that they firſt Appear to be the Sons of God, but not firſt Begin to be ſo; unleſs it be in reſpect of Viſibility. We are to diſtinguiſh between ſecret and open Adoption: The one is the Foundation of the other. Secret Adoption reſpects the Relation itſelf, beſtow'd of mere Grace, in the immanent Act of God's Will, and in his everlaſting Covenant with his Son. Open Adoption reſpects the Viſibility, or Manifeſtation thereof by a tranſient Act in Time: Which I look upon to be no new Act in God, but only his eternal Will herein, in the Declaration of his Word, paſſing upon an elect Veſſel at the appointed Seaſon; whereby the Perſon is admitted into the enjoyment of all the Privileges of this

Relation, as a Fruit of Chriſt's Redemption, and free Juſtification by his Blood. Thus *John* 1. 12. it's ſaid, *To as many as received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God.* And *Gal.* 3. 26. *Ye are all the Children of God by Faith in Chriſt Jeſus.* We are not from hence to infer, that the Elect of God are in no Senſe his Children before Faith, becauſe they are here ſaid to be ſo by Faith: For it is an apparent viſible Sonſhip that is here ſpoken of. The Manifeſtation of the Thing is put for the Being of it: Which is frequent in the ſacred Writings. Thus *Rev.* 22. 7. the Lord ſays, *He that overcometh ſhall Inherit all Things, and I will be his God, and he ſhall be my Son.* We are not to underſtand this as a Promiſe of the Being of Sonſhip to an overcoming Believer, as if he had no ſuch Relation to God before: But of the Manifeſtation thereof, as the *Apoſtle*'s Phraſe is, *Rom.* 8. 19. *He ſhall be my Son*, ſays God; that is, he ſhall openly and glorioufly Appear to be my Son, when thus advanc'd

to

to inherit all Things: And visible Adoption, both in the Grace, and Glory-parts of it, we receive as a fruit of Christ's Redemption. *To him*, saith our Lord, *that overcometh, will I give a white Stone, and in the Stone a new Name written*, *Rev.* 2. 17. The new Name of Adoption, is written in the white Stone of Absolution. And thus our Adoption, in the Conveyance of Relation-Privileges, is by Christ, as Jesus, a Saviour: But the Relation it self chiefly depends upon his Person, as our Head.

Fifthly. As our God, did predestinate us to the Adoption of Children by Christ Jesus, so it was unto [Himself.]

1. Unto himself in respect of special Right and Propriety. We were in this Predestinating Act of his Grace, set apart for himself, as his [Own] Children, in distinction from all the World beside: As he saith concerning his Typical People of old, *Israel is* [*My*] *Son*, *Exod.* 4. 22. My Son by peculiar Grace in Distinction from all the other Works of my Hands.

2. Unto

2. Unto himself in respect of Communion: That so his infinite Heart-Love might flow forth in the Grace and Bowels of a Father, to the full *Supply* of *all our Need*, *according to his Riches in Glory by Christ Jesus*, through Time and to Eternity, *Phil.* 4. 19.

3. Unto himself in respect of Delight and Pleasure. For as a *Father delighteth in his Son*, Prov. 3. 12. so, and much more doth the Lord delight in his Children, and *take Pleasure in them that fear him*, Psal. 147. 11. He delights in us now, as we stand mystically *compleat* in Christ, *Col.* 2. 12. and when we are personally *wrought* up into a full Conformity to his *First-born* Son, our elder Brother, 2 *Cor.* 5. 5. *Rom.* 8. 29. and by him *presented before the Presence of his Glory*, 'twill be *with exceeding Joy*, Jude 24. Oh the inconceivable Delight our Father will take in us when his *many Sons* are brought *to Glory*, *Heb.* 2. 10. *He will rest in his Love, and rejoice over us with*

with ſinging to an endleſs Eternity, *Zeph.* 3. 17. And,

4. Unto himſelf in reſpect of Honour. The Lord, in ſetting apart his Children for himſelf, deſign'd ſuch great things for them, that might get himſelf Honour as the *great God*, *Jer.* 33. 9. And he expects peculiar Honour from them, anſwerable to that nearneſs of Relation they ſtand in to him, and the amazing Favours they receive from him. *If I be a Father, where is mine Honour?* Mal. 1. 6. But this brings me to conſider

The laſt Thing in the Definition: Which is, That God's ultimate End in this Act of Adoption, was, The Praiſe of the Glory of his Grace. And that 1. as diſplay'd. And 2. as aſcribed.

1. As diſplay'd. It was the ſovereign good Pleaſure of *Jehovah*'s Will, to manifeſt that Infinity of Grace that was in his Nature; that ſo the Glory of it might ſhine forth before all intelligent Beings: Which ſet his infinite Wiſdom on work to find out

Ways

Ways and Means to effect it. And here firſt, The Man Chriſt Jeſus was *brought forth* in the early Counſels of Jehovah, into Union with the Second Perſon in God, as the glorious Project of infinite Wiſdom; to anſwer all the Ends of infinite Grace: And as the great Mediator, he was *ſet up from everlaſting*, Prov. 8. 23, 25. Iſa. 49. 3. in whom Grace reſolv'd to glorify itſelf to the utmoſt, in all its out-goings towards Him firſt as an Head, and then in him towards Others as his Members. And there was a glorious Diſplay of Grace in the Beſtowment of this adoptive Relation: So glorious that it tranſcends the Capacity of our preſent Sight, either to look ſtedfaſtly upon it, or fully to take it in. In the Contemplation of which we may well be loſt as in a ſweet Surprize; and cry out with aſtoniſhing Wonder, *Behold, what manner of Love the Father hath beſtowed upon us*, in that he hath given us the Relation, Diſpoſition, and Inheritance of his Children; ſo that *we* [*Now*] *are the*

Sons

Sons of God! 1 Joh. 3. 1, 2. We now bear, in our Soul-part, the glorious Impreſs of this Relation, as we are the *Workmanſhip* of the Holy Ghoſt, *Eph.* 2. 10. God having *ſent the Spirit of his Son into our Hearts, crying, Abba, Father*, Gal. 4. 6. who as a *Spirit of Glory reſteth upon us*, 1 Pet. 4. 14. But *the World knoweth us not*, 1 Joh. 3. 1. becauſe we han't yet *receiv'd the Adoption* of our Body, in the Glory-Image of the *firſt Reſurrection*, Rom. 8. 23. 1 Cor. 15. 43. 49. Rev. 20. 5. which will be ſuch a writing our Father's *Name* in our *Foreheads*, that he that runs may read, whoſe Children we are, Rev. 22. 4. And then the World ſhall [*Know*] that the Father *hath loved* us ſo, as to make us Chriſt's Brethren, even *as he loved* him, *Joh.* 17. 23. to make him the *Firſt-born*, and Head of the Family; when once we are the *Sons of God* as being *the Children of the Reſurrection*, Luke 20. 36. But till then our glorious Relation will not appear to the World: No, nor doth it *yet appear*

pear fully to the Saints themſelves; either what they now *are*, as raiſed up by Grace to the unſpeakable Dignity of Sonſhip; or *what they ſhall be*, when they *appear with* Chriſt in all that Glory, which this Relation doth beſpeak, 1 *John* 3. 2.

'Tis true we have now and then ſome Glimpſes of it here: But how diſtant and imperfect are our Views? how ſhort our ſweeteſt Glances? our cleareſt Apprehenſions how ſoon clouded? ſo that it don't yet appear; becauſe *we ſee but through a Glaſs darkly*, 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. But the time's a coming when we ſhall ſee, with the vail caſt off; our imperfect Faith-Views being ſwallowed up of perfect Glory-Viſion. And Oh the Soul-raviſhing Proſpects we ſhall then have of the Glory of God's Grace, that ſhines forth in this Relation!

2. God's End in this Act of Adoption, was, the Glory of his Grace, as aſcribed. It's becauſe we ſee no more of its Glory, that we abound no more in its Praiſe: For ſurely here's Matter

ter enough, to fill Heaven and Earth, with aſtoniſhing Wonder. We have now and then a *Song* of Praiſe *put into* our Mouths here, *Pſal.* 40. 3. though our Hearts are too often out of Tune: But when in the Reſurrection-Morning, we *appear with* Chriſt in the Glory of this Relation, our Souls ſhall be as a well-ſtrung Inſtrument, while we cry, *Grace, Grace unto it*, Zech. 4. 7. *Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it enter'd into the Heart of Man* (fully) to *conceive* thoſe *unſpeakable Joys* that will fill the Hearts of the Sons of God, 1 *Cor.* 2. 9. when in the glorious *Lamb*, the *New Jeruſalem Temple*, Rev. 21. 22. we ſhall with one united Voice, for ever ſhout forth our loudeſt *Hallelujahs*, to him who hath *predeſtinated us unto the Adoption of Children, by Jeſus Chriſt unto himſelf, according to the good Pleaſure of his Will*, (which to the endleſs Ages of Eternity, will be) *to the Praiſe of the Glory of his Grace*, Eph. 1. 5, 6.

The

The Improvement.

First. Is it so, That Adoption is a gracious, immanent, and eternal Act of God's sovereign Will: Then let the Saints admire the Earliness, Sovereignty, Eternity of *Jehovah*'s Grace herein. Dear Souls, you had room in God's Heart, and he *put* you *among the Children*, Jer. 31. 3. in order to bring you to Glory, before he made the Worlds. Give God your Heart, prefer his Glory, Honour, and Interest, before the World, and your dearest Enjoyments in it. Let your Love, manifested to him in all the Paths of Obedience, be cast as a Drop into the infinite Ocean of his Grace, 1 *John* 5. 3. and 4. 19. Our God is infinitely worthy of all our Love, were our Souls capable of ten thousand times more than they are, because of *the great things he hath done for* us in Christ, 1 *Sam.* 12. 24. and especially because of his own infinite Excellencies, the immense Glories of his Being, *Psal.* 148. 13, 14.

Secondly,

Secondly, Is this Relation we are taken into by Adoption, a Supernatural, and Covenant-Relation: Let's think upon the Greatneſs, and Freeneſs of that Love which beſtow'd this high Relation, till we are ſwallow'd up in it, with the Apoſtle, 1 *John* 3. 1. *Behold what manner of Love*, &c. If the Man *Adam* in his Paradiſical State, might ſay for Himſelf and all His, *Lord, what is Man, that thou art mindful of him?* *Pſal.* 8, 4. much more might the Lord Chriſt ſay ſo for Himſelf and all His, when he was exalted as the *Heavenly Man*, Prov. 8. 23. 1 Cor. 15. 47. and had an heavenly Seed given him, *Heb.* 2. 13. who together in and with him were advanced unto an heavenly Relation to God, *John* 20. 17. and ſo inveſted with a ſupernatural Right to all the Priviledges of their *Father's Houſe* in Heaven, *Ch.* 14. 2. which ſecured the full Enjoyment of that glorious Inheritance, 1 *Pet.* 1. 4. ſettled upon the *Heirs of Promiſe*, Heb. 6. 17. *Lord, what is Man*, that Mean Low Thing, that thou

thou shouldʼst be thus *mindful of him*, *Job* 25. 6. Who could have thought, That the Creature Man, who was but of an *earthly* Make, 1 *Cor.* 15. 47. and as such could sustain but an earthly Relation to God, and have but a natural Right to, and Enjoyment of earthly Blessings, (which was the highest Dignity he was capable of in his earthly State) should ever have been thus advanced to an heavenly Relation, Title, and Inheritance? *What is Man*, whose Original was of the Dust, *Gen.* 2. 7. that he should be taken up to dwell in Heaven, *Job.* 14. 3. the Place of God's immediate Glory-presence, *Isa.* 57. 15. And not only to dwell in the Place of Glory, but also to possess the State of Glory, 1 *Pet.* 5. 10. which consists in the most close and intimate Communion with God in Christ, that finite Beings are capable of, without the least Interruption to an endless Eternity, *John* 17. 21. So that, if we take a View of those Springs of supernatural Grace, whence the adoptive Relation flows, of the Relation

itself

itſelf beſtow'd, or of the inſeparable Conſequents of it, which reach as far as our eternal Glorification; and ſee all ſecur'd in an everlaſting Covenant; we may well ſay, *Behold, what manner of Love the Father hath beſtowed upon us, that we ſhould be called the Sons of God!* 1 Joh. 3. 1.

Think, dear Saints, how ſecurely you *ſtand in* this *Grace!* Rom. 5. 2. The Glory of the natural Relation might be loſt: But the ſupernatural cannot. The Fall could not mar it: Though thereby we were brought into a State of Slavery to *Satan*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 26. Servitude to *Sin*, *John* 8. 34. and Bondage to *the Law*, *Gal.* 4. 3. But *becauſe we were Sons* by ſupernatural Grace, *Ver.* 6. God, *in the fulneſs of Time ſent forth his Son, to Redeem* us *out of the Houſe of Servants*, Mic. 6. 4. *That we might receive the Adoption of Sons* by Faith, which was previouſly ours by abſolute Grace. And has alſo *ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into our Hearts*, To witneſs our Relation to God, and work in our Souls

filial

filial Diſpoſitions towards him: That ſo being *Deliver'd out of the Hands of our Enemies we might ſerve him without Fear, in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs all the Days of our Lives.* *Luke* 1. 74, 75. from a Principle of Love, and Gratitude, ſurpaſſing the higheſt Principles of Obedience found in pure Nature, and every way agreeable to the tranſcendent Dignity of the ſupernatural Relation in which we ſtand. Our Relation don't depend upon our Obedience, But upon the *immutable* Will, *Promiſe*, and *Oath* of *Jehovah*, *Heb.* 6. 17, 18. And as this affords *ſtrong Conſolation to the Heirs of Promiſe*; ſo let it Teach us daily to hate Sin intenſely, and to flee from every *appearance of Evil*, 1 *Tim.* 6. 11. 1 *Theſ.* 5. 22. How ſhall [We] Sin againſt that Love, that will never Diſinherit us! Oh, what Childlike Ingenuity, ſhould this work in our Hearts towards our dear Father, ſince we are *no more Servants*, to return to Servitude, *Gal.* 4. 7. but Sons, *Free* Children that ſhall *Abide in the Houſe for ever.* *Joh.* 8. 34, 35.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Was it a certain Number of Perſons from among Mankind, which were taken into this Relation: Then let's Adore diſtinguiſhing Grace each one for our-ſelves, while Thouſands are paſs'd by, And we our individual Perſons abſolutely *predeſtinated unto the Adoption of Children*, *Eph.* 1. 5. And being raiſed up to this unſpeakable Dignity of Sonſhip, let's *Forget* our *own People*, *and* our *Father Adam's Houſe*. *Pſal.* 45. 10. We are called to walk in daily Fellowſhip with the Family of Heaven, as ſuch that are *no more Strangers and Foreigners*, *but Fellow Citizens with the Saints*, *and of the Houſhold of God*, *Eph.* 2. 19.

Fourthly, Were the Perſons adopting Grace fixed on, as then, conſider'd in the pure Maſs: Let's learn hence, the Height of adopting Love. The Heights of natural Bliſs were low Things, compar'd with the ſuper-excellent Glories adopting Love deſign'd, 1 *Cor.* 15. 47, 48. *Rom.* 8. 29, 30.

Fifthly, Was Chriſt Jeſus the Pattern, by which God did proceed in this

this Act of Adoption: This informs us, as, of the transcendent Dignity of the Adoptive-Relation, so, that it is an higher Glory we are to be *wrought* up to, than the first *Adam* in his pure State was capable of. Not *Adam*'s Nature-likeness, but Christ's Grace, and Glory-Image is the Pattern to which we shall be conform'd. For the Relation, Disposition, and Inheritance of God's adopted Children, are inseperably join'd together. They are all of them Glory-Sons, *Heb.* 2. 10. i. e. absolutely ordain'd to Glory, in, and with himself for ever: Christ the eldest Son, as the Supreme Heir; and We the younger Brethren, as *Joint-Heirs with* him of this vast Inheritance. *Rom.* 8. 17. Oh amazing Project of infinite Wisdom! Did God advance our Nature into personal Union with his own Son, that so the Man Christ, constituted *Mediator*, and *Head*, might become the great Receptacle of all Grace, both of Relation, and Communication; that so he, as the *First-born* of the Family, might be the comprehensive

prehenſive Pattern of all the beautiful Lineaments to be drawn upon the younger Brethren! 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. *Col.* 1. 18, 19. *Rom.* 8. 29.

And further, Was it by Chriſt, as the Conveyor of Relation-Privileges, as he is Jeſus, a Saviour: Let's adore infinite Wiſdom herein; that ſubſervient to the Glory of all the Divine Perfections, and particularly of adopting Love, did ſee it meet, that Chriſt's younger Brethren, belonging to the Family of Heaven, ſhould yet ſuſtain an earthly Relation to God, in their firſt *Adam*-Head, and in him be permitted to Fall with all Mankind; and thereby Marr the Glory of their natural Relation, ſetting themſelves further off from God than ever, by becoming Strangers and Enemies, *Eph.* 2. 3, 12. *Col.* 1. 21. that ſo adopting Love might be the more commended, in raiſing up the Sons of God by ſupernatural Grace, from the Depths of Miſery, to the ultimate Heights of their deſigned Glory! And oh! the marvellous Difference, this ſame Grace

put between the Sons of God, and *the Rest*, *Rom.* 11. 7. which in the Fall were irrecoverably Loſt, 2 *Cor.* 4. 3. while theſe never loſt their eternal Relation to God in Chriſt, tho' by Nature in *Adam*, they *were Children of Wrath even as others*, *Eph.* 2. 3. Nor that amazing Security they had under all, to be Redeem'd both by Price and Power, *Hoſ.* 13. 14. 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. *Eph.* 1. 19. thro' the Son's, and Spirit's Work; 'till at laſt wrought up into a compleat Conformity to God's *Firſt-born*, their elder Brother, the amazing Glory-Pattern, to which they were firſt Predeſtinated! *Rom.* 8. 29. Oh the *Heights*, *Lengths*, *Depths*, and *Breadths* of this Grace! *Eph.* 3. 18.

Sixthly, Did our God Predeſtinate us unto the Adoption of Children by Chriſt Jeſus, unto himſelf: How Marvellous is this Wonder! Let's think upon his infinite Greatneſs, as *God Bleſſed for evermore*, 2 Cor. 11. 31. together with our own Littleneſs, *Job* 25. 6. and 'twill fill us with Aſtoniſhment, that we ſhould be ſet apart for himſelf!

ſelf! Our *Jehovah*, might for ever have took up his Satisfaction in his own great [SELF]; Reſting in that high Communion which was held between his *Three* glorious Perſons, 1 *John* 5. 7. *John* 14, 10. and never have gone forth into Creature-Converſe: For this *high and lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity, whoſe Name is Holy*, Iſa. 57. 15. needed none of his Creatures. *And he that comes to God, muſt believe that he* [*IS*] Heb. 11. 6. That Self-exiſtent, Independent, and Self-ſufficient Being, whoſe eſſential Bleſſedneſs none of his Creatures can add any Thing to, or take any Thing from. Look we to this terreſtrial Globe: What's the ſpacious Earth? *Before him, all Nations, are but as a Drop of the Bucket, a duſt of the Ballance*, Iſa. 40. 17. Yea, leſs than nothing and Vanity. Let's aſcend to the Celeſtial Bodies, and *behold even to the Moon, and it ſhineth not; and the Stars are not pure in his Sight*, Job 25. 5. Yea, if we riſe as high as the Place of his immediate Preſence, behold, *the Heavens are not*

clean in his Sight; and he charged his Angels with Folly, Job. 15. 15. *and* 4. 18. 'Tis infinite Condeſcenſion in the great God, to *Behold the Things* done *in Heaven*, by thoſe noble Creatures, the Holy Angels, *Pſal.* 113. 6. How adorable then is that Grace, which caſt a look of Favour upon ſorry Man, whoſe *Foundation is in the Duſt!* Job 4. 19. Yea, that ſet us apart for his great [Self] notwithſtanding our [Littleneſs]! Yea, notwithſtanding all our foreſeen [Vileneſs]. *Iſa.* 48. 8. And our Father's Love abides ſtill unchangeably the Same towards us. *Mal.* 3. 6. And having predeſtinated us unto himſelf, he'll *cleanſe* us *from all* our *Filthineſs*, Ezek. 36. 25. and ſet us *Holy, and without Blame before him* in *Love*, as the Objects of his eternal Complacency, *Eph.* 1. 4. *Who*, or what are We, oh Lord, God? or *what* is our Father's *Houſe, that thou* ſhouldſt *bring us hitherto?* 2 Sam. 7. 18.

Laſtly, Was God's ultimate End in this Act of Adoption, the Praiſe of the Glory of his Grace, both as diſplay'd and aſcrib'd:

Then

Then let's Admire that Grace which illuſtriouſly Shines forth herein. Well may we each one for our ſelves, cry out, *Lord, what is Man!* Pſal. 8. 4. with Heb. 2. 6, 7, 8, 9. Yea, we may go higher, for the Words are ſpoken of the Man Chriſt in his Type *Adam*. Our Lord Chriſt was aſtoniſh'd at the Glory of Free-Grace in taking ſuch Notice of him: And if this is the Language of the Head, well may it be of the Members.

And let our Wonder at this Grace, engage us, to aſcribe unto God, the Glory due unto his Name. Chriſt's Heart is more taken with Free-Grace than any of ours. 'Tis he only has a perfect Knowledge of its Glory, *Mat.* 11. 27. and is therefore able to give it its adequate Praiſe. And when the *Apoſtle* brings him in, ſaying, *I will declare thy Name unto my Brethren*, his next Words are, *in the midſt of the Church, I will Sing Praiſe unto thee*, Heb. 2. 12. Our Praiſes are very imperfect, and it's well for us that they aſcend to God in the Perfection of

Christ's Praises. 'Tis hence they become an *acceptable Sacrifice*, to his and our Father, 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. *By him therefore*, as our great high Priest, *let's offer unto God the Sacrifice of Praise continually*, Heb. 13. 15. Let's Praise adopting Love, in Heart, Lip and Life.

My Son, give me thine Heart, says God, *Prov.* 23. 26. Let's in Faith then *consider* daily, *what great Things the Lord hath done for us*, in *putting* us *among the Children*, 1 Sam. 12. 24. Jer. 3. 19. to enkindle our Love, and inflame our Praises.

Let no corrupt Communication proceed out of our Mouth, Eph. 4. 29. but let our *Speech be always with Grace, season'd* as *with Salt, that it may minister Grace to the Hearers*, Col. 4. 6.

Yea, in the whole of our Lives, let's *be Holy in all manner of Conversation*, 1 Pet. 1. 15. that so we may Praise adopting Grace, all sorts of Ways.

Our Father, is a God, *Glorious in Holiness*, Ex. 15. 11. and hath bidden us, *be Holy as he is Holy*, 1 Pet. 1. 16.

Holiness

Holineſs becometh his *Houſe for ever*, Pſal. 93. 15. his Houſe below, as well as his Houſe above. Yea, our Father hath but one *whole Family*, Eph. 3. 15. tho' one part of it be on Earth, and the other in Heaven. We *are come to the general Aſſembly, and Church of the Firſt-born, to the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect, and to an innumerable Company of* Angels, *Heb.* 12. 22, 23. Then let us not, by Sin, diſhonour our *Holy Father*, John 17. 11. the *Holy Jeſus*, Act. 4. 30. our elder Brother, nor the *Holy Spirit* our Comforter, *Eph.* 4. 30. Debaſe our *Heavenly* Birth, *Heb.* 3. 1. nor act unbecoming the *Holy Angels*, Luke 9. 26. our Attendants, *Heb.* 1. 14. 'Tis the moſt unbecoming Sight, to ſee an High-born Son of God, defiling himſelf with that low, baſe *abominable Thing* [Sin], *Jer.* 44. 4. *We are* made *a Spectacle unto the World, to Angels, and to Men*, 1 Cor. 4. 9. The Holy God, Angels, and Men, expect to ſee us Holy: Wicked Men and Devils watch for our Halting: What need then have we to *Watch, and keep*

our Garments? Rev. 16. 15. We are *Called unto Holineſs*, 1 Theſ. 4. 7. let's make it our Buſineſs to *Perfect* the ſame daily, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. that ſo our *Father* may be *Glorify'd*, John 15. 8. and we appear like his Children, by the nobleneſs of our Spirits, and whiteneſs of our Robes, *Mat.* 5. 45. *Rom.* 6. 2. *Rev.* 3. 4. In a Word, let the Grace of Adoption, engage us in Faith to abound in its Praiſes here, 'till in ſuperior Strains we Adore its Wonders, as the Glory of it opens in perfect Viſion above. For *now we ſee through a Glaſs darkly; but then Face to Face: Now we know in Part; but then ſhall we Know even as alſo we are Known.* 1 Cor. 13. 12.

FINIS.

A

DISCOURSE

UPON THE

Inheritance of the Adopted Sons of God.

HAVING in the foregoing Discourse, chiefly insisted upon God's Act of Adoption, predestinating us into a supernatural Relation: And also therein given some Hints, of what the Inheritance is that was settled upon the Sons of God, as standing in that Re-

lation: I ſhall now farther take it into Conſideration, and make it a diſtinct Head of Diſcourſe. The Method I propoſe, is,

Firſt, To prove that the adopted Sons of God have an Inheritance.

Secondly, To enquire what their Inheritance is, or wherein it conſiſts.

Thirdly, When it was made theirs.

Fourthly, How it was ſettled upon them.

Fifthly, Which Way they come to enjoy it.

Sixthly, When they enter upon the Poſſeſſion of it. And,

Seventhly, Something by Way of Reflection. I begin with the

Firſt, To prove that the adopted Sons of God have an Inheritance. The Truth of this might be evidenced from many Scriptures: But two or three expreſs Texts, may be ſufficient to eſtabliſh the ſame. *The Lord knoweth the Days of the Upright: And their* [*Inheritance*] *ſhall be for ever*, Pſal. 37. 18. *In whom we have obtain'd an* [*Inheritance*] *being predeſtinated*

nated according to the Purpose of him who worketh all things after the Counsel of his own Will, Eph. 1. 11. And Ver. 14. *Which is the Earnest of our* [*Inheritance*], *To an* [*Inheritance*] *incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away*, 1 Pet. 1. 4. From these *Texts* it is fully proved, That the Sons of God have an Inheritance. I proceed,

Secondly, To enquire what their Inheritance is, or wherein it consists. But Oh, who can set it forth! Neither Men nor Angels can fully tell what it is. The Words of *Elihu* are very applicable here; *If a Man speak, surely he shall be swallow'd up*, Job 37. 20. The Inheritance of the Sons of God, is so great, that Words can't set it forth; yea, so vast, that our Thoughts cannot take it in. We are so far from delineating its Glory in our clearest Expressions, and highest Conceptions, that we rather *Darken Counsel, by Words without knowledge*, Job 38. 2. But though we can't fully comprehend it, no, not when grown up *to*

the

the Stature of a perfect Man in Christ Jesus, Eph. 4. 13. yet it is our Duty to lisp out its Glory, even while we are like *Children* in this imperfect State, 1 *Cor.* 13. 11.

Quer. What then is the Inheritance? This Query may be answered by shewing, 1. *Negatively*, What it is not. And 2. *Positively*, What it is.

Answ. 1. *Negatively*, The Inheritance of the adopted Sons of God, doth not lie in worldly Pleasures, Riches, Honours, &c. For these outward and temporal Blessings, are Favours which God out of his common Bounty vouchsafes to *all*, Psal. 145. 9. yea, even to his greatest *Enemies*, Mat. 5. 45. which things indeed are their All: And therefore the *Psalmist* speaking of the *Men of* this *World*, *Their Portion*, says he, *is in this Life*, Psal. 17. 14. And it was said to the rich Man, who *in Hell lift up his Eyes*, *Remember*, *that thou in thy Life-time receivedst thy good things*, or thy Portion of good, *Luke* 15. 25. And where their *Treasure* is, their *Hearts* are also, *Mat.* 6.

21.

21. This being the Language of 'em continually, *Who will ſhew us any good*, Pſal. 4. 6, 7. that is, any temporal worldly Good, whereby we may encreaſe our Store of Corn, Wine, Oyl, *&c?* But the Portion of God's Children doth not lie in theſe things.

And as their Inheritance doth not conſiſt in the perfect Enjoyment of outward and temporal Bleſſings ſince the Fall: So neither did it conſiſt in that Fulneſs of Nature-good, which in a Perfection of natural Bleſſings, was ſettled upon us in our Head *Adam*, *Pſal.* 8. 5. This was indeed our natural Inheritance: And it was every Way ſuited to make us perfectly happy, as natural Men in the State of Innocence. But this was a Privilege common to all *Adam*'s Poſterity; and the Portion of the Sons of God, is peculiar to them. What then is their Inheritance? Which may be anſwer'd,

Anſw. 2. Poſitively. It is no leſs than GOD HIMSELF, as the God of all Grace and Glory, making over himſelf to them, as their Eternal

nal ALL. And here, as in an heavenly Rapture, we may cry out concerning it, as the Children of *Israel*, about their *Manna*, *What is it? What is it?* Exod. 16. 15. Yea, lost in a sweet Surprize, we may even sit down in Silence. *For who by searching can find out God? Who can find out the Almighty to Perfection?* Job 11. 7. There are such *Heights*, *Depths*, *Lengths*, and *Breadths* of boundless Love display'd herein, which infinitely surpass the highest *Knowledge* of the most intelligent Creatures, *Eph.* 3. 18, 19.

The Saints swim in this Ocean; and find it to be an immense Sea of Life, Love, Joy, and Glory: The Depths of which are unfathomable; its Breadths immeasurable; its Lengths eternal; and its Heights infinite.

Yea, the very Angels in Heaven, with intense Desire, *stoop down to look into* these *things*, 1 Pet. 1. 12. That Jehovah should be the Portion of his People, is indeed Matter of Astonishment: And yet it is a most glorious

Truth

Truth that ſhines forth in the Sacred Records.

Thus when the Lord by the *Prophet*, doth ſpeak of himſelf as the God of his People *Iſrael*, and their tranſcendent Glory, in this Reſpect, above thoſe Nations that ſerved dumb Idols; *The Portion of* Jacob (ſays he) *is not like unto them: for he is the Former of all things*, Jer. 10. 16. It is as if the Lord ſhould have ſaid, There can be no Compariſon between the *Portion* of my People, as I, *the Former of all things*, am their Inheritance, and *the Portion* of thoſe Nations that ſerve Idol-gods; which are the Work of Mens Hands; that can neither See, nor Hear, nor in the leaſt wiſe ſave them that call upon them. Nay, ſo far are they from ſaving others, that *theſe gods that have not made the Earth and the Heavens, ſhall themſelves periſh from under theſe Heavens*, ver. 11. And *the Nations* that ſerve 'em ſhall *Tremble* at the fierce Wrath of Jehovah, and ſhall *not be able to abide the Indignation* of him, who is *the living and true God, and an everlaſting King*, ver. 10. *But the Portion*

tion of Jacob *is not like them: For he is the Former of all things*, ver. 16. As if the Lord ſhould ſay, It's I, I my ſelf, whoſe Name alone is [JEHOVAH] that am the Portion of my People. It's I the Former of all things, the Creator and Poſſeſſor of Heaven and Earth, *Iſa.* 42. 5. *Gen.* 14. 19. whoſe Name is [I AM] *Exod.* 3. 14. that have Fulneſs of Being in my ſelf; and give Life and Being to all Creatures and things at my Pleaſure, *Heb.* 11. 8. *Act.* 17. 28. *Rev.* 4. 11. and am therefore well able to give the moſt ſubſtantial Being to all that vaſt Happineſs, I have ordained for my People, in Nature, Grace, and Glory: So that in [Me] they have a tranſcendent and an everlaſting Portion.

That *Jehovah*, is the God and Portion of his People, is a Truth oft inculcated in the Sacred Scriptures. *I will be unto them a God*, is the great Promiſe of the New Covenant, *Heb.* 8. 10. And how often doth the Lord comfort his Children with this ſpiritual Cordial? When in their Fainting-fits, he

he ſays unto them, *Fear not, for I am with thee: Be not diſmay'd, for I am thy God*, Iſa. 41. 10. Thus he ſpake to his Servant *Abram*: *Fear not*, Abram; for *I am thy Shield, and thy exceeding great Reward*: or thy exceeding great Portion, *Gen.* 15. 1. And to *Aaron*, *I am thy Part, and thine Inheritance*, Numb. 18. 20.

And when once this joyful Sound is proclaim'd by the bleſſed Spirit in the Hearts of God's Children, Oh how doth it revive their drooping Souls! It raiſeth them up from under all ſorts of Diſcouragements, into an holy Boldneſs, and joyful Triumph of Faith, with the *Pſalmiſt*, *My Heart and my Fleſh faileth: but God is the Strength of my Heart, and my Portion for ever*, Pſal. 73. 26. And with the Church in the midſt of Diſtreſſes, *The LORD is my Portion, ſaith my Soul, therefore will I hope in him*, Lam. 3. 24.

And as God himſelf is the Portion of his Children, ſo it is himſelf as the God of all Grace and Glory. And he

he is so, 1. Essentially. 2. Provisionally. And 3. Communicatively.

1. *Essentially.* Grace and Glory are the essential Perfections of God's Nature. And thus he proclaim'd his Name (or the Perfections of his Nature by which he would be known) to *Moses*, Exod. 34. 6. *The LORD, the LORD God, Merciful, Gracious*, &c. Mercy and Grace, here, are his Nature. And *Acts* 7. 2. he is said to be, *The God of Glory.* That is, the God of Glory essentially. Grace and Glory in God, are HIMSELF: He is all his Perfections, 1 *John* 4. 16.

2. He is the God of all Grace and Glory *Provisionally.* In that he has made a full Provision of all sorts of communicable Grace and Glory, and stor'd up all these Riches as an immense Stock, or Portion for all his Children in his own Son, as the great Mediator and Head of the Church: *For it hath pleased the Father, that in him all Fulness should dwell*, Col. 1. 19. And,

3. God

3. God is the God of all Grace and Glory, *Communicatively*. In that he communicates all Grace and Glory out of the infinite Riches of his own Nature, and out of his Covenant-Provision in his Son: As saith the *Apostle*, *My God shall supply all your Need according to his Riches in Glory, by Christ Jesus*, Phil. 4. 19. The Original of all our Supply is according to, or out of, the Riches of *Jehovah*'s Nature: And it's by Christ, as the Way of Communication. Thus *the Lord God will give Grace and Glory*, Psal. 84. 11. or communicate Grace and Glory, to all his Children, through Time, and to Eternity. And in these *three* Respects, *Jehovah*, as the God of all Grace and Glory, is the Inheritance of his Children. All the infinite Perfections of his Nature are made over to us for our Good and Advantage. And what he is in his incommunicable Attributes, he is For us: And what he is in his communicable Attributes he is both For us and To us.

And,

And, as I humbly conceive, we may safely retain the Distinction of communicable, and incommunicable Attributes in the Divine Being: Because some of the Divine Perfections casting the Rays of their Glory thro' Christ upon the Creature, transform it *into the same Image*, 2 Cor. 3. 18. And others there are which the Creature can bear no Resemblance of. 'Tis true, indeed, that even God's communicable Attributes are, in some Sense, incommunicable; that is, as to the Infiniteness of 'em as they are in God: So that God is gracious, and glorious infinitely as God: And when he communicates out of his own Nature, to make a Creature gracious or glorious, he doth not communicate infinitely; because the Creature is not capable of it, and so he doth not deify that Creature; but the greatest Perfection of its Grace and Glory, is still limited and finite, answerable to its Creature-Being. And yet there is a real, tho' not an infinite Communication, in these as well as other his communicable

ble Attributes. So as that, it is ſtill *the Fulneſs of God*, in Nature, Grace, and Glory, that is the infinite Ocean that filleth all in all, *Eph.* 3. 19. *and* 1. 23. in all ſorts of Creatures, according to their diſtinct Natures, and different Ends. Thus God, as the God of Nature, did at firſt make, and ſtill doth uphold, and fill all Things in the old Creation: And as the God of Grace and Glory, he makes, upholds, and fills all Things in the new Creation. *Acts* 17. 24, 25, 28. *Eph.* 4. 6. *Rom.* 11. 36.

Further, I Judge this Diſtinction not only Safe, but Neceſſary. For, if our Portion did only conſiſt in Grace and Glory, as created Communicables in the Perſon of Chriſt; 'twould fall far ſhort of JEHOVAH, Himſelf, who is *our Portion*, Lam. 3. 24. We are *Heirs of GOD*, Rom. 8. 17. of all [His] Riches, and *Joint-Heirs* [*With*] *Chriſt*. The Riches of Chriſt, as Mediator, and Ours in him are Unſearchable, as the Man Chriſt, ſtands perſonally United to the Godhead; and we

United

United to the Person of Christ. Christ stands in [God], the infinite Ocean of Grace and Glory; and We in [Him] as the *Medium* of Communication.

And to this purpose Dr. *Owen* speaks in his Book *of Communion with God*: where setting forth the Excellencies of Christ, as the Husband of the Church, he hath these Words, *pag.* 78, 79.

"It is not the Grace of a Creature, "nor all the Grace that can possibly at "once dwell in a created Nature, that "will serve our turn. We are too in- "digent to be suited with such a Sup- "ply. There was a fulness of Grace "in the humane Nature of Christ; "*He receiv'd not the Spirit by Measure*, "John 3. 34. A fulness like that of "Light in the Sun, or of Water in the "Sea, I speak not in respect of Com- "munication, but Sufficiency. A ful- "ness incomparably above the Mea- "sure of Angels, yet it was not pro- "perly an infinite Fulness; it was a "created, and therefore a limited Ful- "ness. If it could be conceived as "seperated from the Deity, surely so

"many

" many thirſty, guilty Souls as every " Day drink deep and large Draughts " of Grace and Mercy from him, would " (if I may ſo ſpeak) ſink him to the " very Bottom: Nay, it could afford " no ſupply at all, but only in a moral " Way. But when the Conduit of his " Humanity is inſeperably united to " the infinite, inexhauſtible Fountain " of the Deity, who can look into the " Depths thereof? If now there be " Grace enough for Sinners in an al- " ſufficient God, it is in Chriſt. And " indeed in any other there cannot be " enough."

But oh, the unſpeakable Bleſſedneſs of the Heirs of God, in that they have [Himſelf] as the God of all Grace and Glory for their Inheritance! With what inexpreſſible *Joy*, may *we draw Water out of theſe Wells of Salvation!* Iſa. 12. 3. When *the Veſſels of Mercy*, Rom. 9. 23. are caſt into the endleſs, boundleſs, bottomleſs Ocean of *Jehovah*'s Glory in Chriſt, for which they were *prepar'd*; with what inconceivable Pleaſure will they take in a full vari-

ety

ety of Glory to the utmost of their vast Capacities, without the least fear of Waste, or Diminution to Eternity; while their GOD, is their GLORY! *Isa.* 60. 19. It must needs (as one well hints) be enough for us, for it's enough for God himself to Eternity. Dr. *Goodwin* 4 Vol. 2 Book Page 127. &c. But to proceed,

Since *Jehovah*, the God of all Grace and Glory, is the Inheritance of his Children; as such, we should live upon him continually, both with respect to Acts of Grace without us, and to the Work of Grace within us. We should live upon *Jehovah* as our Portion, in the Infiniteness of his Love towards us.

1. In the Acts of Grace without us. For there are infinite Riches of Grace and Glory, display'd in the Acts of Election, Adoption, Pardon, and Justification. The Love of God is infinitely Rich, Free, and Unchangeable as it is his Nature: And therefore it is so in all the Acts of his Will. *Jehovah changeth not, and therefore* it is that we

are not Consumed, Mal. 3. 6. *The Lord our God in the midst of* us *is Mighty; he will Save, he will Rejoice over* us *with Singing, he will Rest in his Love*, Zeph. 3. 17. And therefore well may we Rest in it. *The Gifts and Calling of God are without Repentance.* Rom. 11. 29. His calling us his *People*, Psal. 78. 52. his *Sons and Daughters*, 2 Cor. 6. 18. his *Jewels*, Mal. 3. 17. together with all the Gifts of Grace and Glory that were bestowed upon us as such, are absolutely without Repentance; either as to the Settlement, or Communication of 'em. *The Counsel of the LORD will stand for ever, and the Thoughts of his Heart*, in his everlasting Kindness to us in Christ Jesus, will endure *to all Generations.* Psal. 33. 11. And as Faith may Feast on all the Riches of Mercy, Love, and Grace that are in *Jehovah*'s Nature, as they are made Ours in the Acts of Grace without us, to Delight us infinitely; to bestow all Blessings upon us freely; to Pity and Pardon us continually; so we should Live upon Jehovah, as our Portion, with Respect

2. To the Work of Grace within us. We need abundance of Grace, not only to begin, but also to carry on our Conformity to Christ, in his Grace and Glory-Image: But there is an Infinite Fulness in the God of all Grace and Glory, that is every way sufficient for us, in Time and to Eternity. Whatever *Jehovah* IS in his own Nature, that he is to Us in Christ, as he is Ours in an everlasting Covenant.

Is he *Good*, Luke 13. 17. That he is for us. The infinite goodness of his Nature, as made ours in Covenant, is the Source of all our Happiness, *Psal.* 119. 68. And as God is good for us, as the immense Ocean whence all our Supplies come: So he is good to us, in that he communicates of his Goodness through Christ, to *make us Good*, Mat. 12. 33. in his new-Creation *Work* upon us, *Eph.* 2. 10. whereby he implants, and maintains a Principle of *Goodness* in our Hearts, *Gal.* 5. 22.

Is God *Love*, 1 John 4. 16. This he is for us, in all the out-goings of his Heart towards us. And he is also

Love

Love to us, in that he Communicates, or *ſheds abroad his Love in our Hearts*, Rom. 5. 5. whereby he Forms his Love-Image there; and cauſeth our Souls to *Love him* again, as being enkindled with his own Love, 1 *John* 4. 19.

Is Jehovah *Merciful*, Exod. 34. 6. This he is for us. And it is from the greatneſs, freeneſs, fulneſs, and eternity of his *Mercy*, as made ours in *Covenant*, Pſal. 89. 28. that he pardoneth all our Sins, *Pſal.* 103. 3. healeth all our Backſlidings, *Hoſea* 14. 4. pitieth us in all our Weakneſs, *Pſal.* 103. 13. and delivereth us out of all our Diſtreſſes, *Pſal.* 107. 13. And as in the infiniteneſs of his Bowels he is Mercy for us: So alſo he is Mercy to us, in that he makes us as his Children, to bear ſome Reſemblance of our merciful Father, *Luke* 6. 36.

Is he *Gracious*, Exod. 34. 6. He is ſo for us, in all the Acts of his Grace without us: And as ſuch he is the Fountain of all Grace to us, in all the Works of his Grace upon us.

And is our God, Glorious in himſelf, or *the God of Glory*, Acts 7. 2. Iſa. 60. 19. As ſuch, he is an Ocean of Glory for us to Swim in: And an Ocean of Glory to us, ſo as to fill us with Glory.

Again, is he *Light*, 1 John 1. 5. The uncreated Fountain of it: This he is for us in Chriſt: As ſuch he'll be the Object of our eternal Complacency, *Eccleſ.* 11. 7. And he is alſo Light to us, when as *the Father of Lights*, Jam. 1. 17. he communicates Light, by creating a Divine Principle of Light in our Hearts, and by carrying on, and encreaſing this *Light of Life* here in Grace, *John* 8. 12. 'till we enter upon the full Poſſeſſion of our *Inheritance in* the *Light* of Glory, *Col.* 1. 12. God, as Light, darting forth the Rays of his Glory thro' Chriſt, is Light for us, to be beheld, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. And he, by the transforming Glory of his Light diſplay'd, is Light to us, by way of Communication, ſo as to make us *Light in the Lord*, Eph. 5. 8.

Again,

Again, is he *Life* or the *living God*, John 5. 26. Acts 14. 15. This he is for us, as he is ours in Chriſt: *Our Life is hid with Chriſt in God*, Col. 3. 3. And as he is the original Fountain of Life for us, Natural, Spiritual, and Eternal: So alſo he is to us, in the Communications of it thro' Chriſt.

Is he, the *Lord God Almighty*, Gen. 17. 1. This he is for us, in all his Works of Nature, Grace and Glory. And as the Lord God Omnipotent, is Strength for us: So alſo he is Strength to us, 1. Defenſively, in that as the ſtrong God, he is *our Rock* to Secure and Defend us, *Pſal.* 94. 22. And 2. Influentially, he is our *Strength* to make us Strong, *Pſal.* 73. 26. He *puts Strength* into us, *Job* 23. 6. we derive all our Nature-Strength from him, and all the Degrees of our Grace-Strength, either to live upon him, or to him: To Walk with him in ſweet Communion and Fellowſhip, or to Fight his Battles againſt all Enemies. And we ſhall derive all our Glory-Strength from him, when in the Reſurrection-Morn-

ing the Bodies of the Saints ſhall be raiſed in Power, 1 *Cor.* 15. 43. and ſo their intire Perſons, be made capable to bear that *Weight of Glory* which ſhall then be conferr'd upon them, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17.

Again, Is he *the only wiſe God*, 1 Tim. 1. 17. This he is for us; in that, in the Infinity of his Wiſdom, he hath *abounded towards us* in all his Riches of Grace and Glory, *Eph.* 1. 7, 8. Hence it is, that in his wiſe Counſels he hath diſpos'd of all things in ſuch an excellent Order, as ſhall moſt effectually ſubſerve all the Ends of his Glory, *Prov.* 16. 4. and our Good, *Rom.* 8. 28. And he is Wiſdom to us, in that he makes us wiſe, *Dan.* 12. 3. All our Wiſdom is but a Communication out of his Fulneſs: And therefore we are bid, to *ask Wiſdom* of him *who gives* it *liberally*, Jam. 1. 5.

Farther, Is he *a juſt God*, Iſa. 45. 21. This alſo he is for us. Hence he's true and faithful in all his Covenant Promiſes, and Engagements to his Children, as well as in all his Threatnings

nings to his Enemies. *He abideth faithful* in both, whether we are in the Exerciſe of Faith about it, or not; *for he cannot deny* himſelf, 2 *Tim.* 2. 13. He is Juſt for us, in that he declares us *Juſt* in the imputed Righteouſneſs of his Son, *Rom.* 3. 26. His Juſtice is our Friend, and conſtantly diſchargeth us in the higheſt Court; notwithſtanding all the Accuſations that may be brought againſt us by Satan, Men, Law, or Conſcience, *Rom.* 8. 33. And he is alſo Juſt, or the Fountain of Juſtice for us: In that he makes us *Juſt*, *Iſa.* 26. 7. by creating a Principle of Juſtice in our Souls, and maintaining it in our Hearts and Lives.

Is he a God, *glorious in Holineſs*, *Exod.* 15. 11. This alſo he is for us, *in all his Ways and Works*, Pſ. 145. 17. 'Tis from the infinite *Purity* of his Nature, that he *Hates* Sin infinitely, *Hab.* 1. 13. and will therefore deſtroy it perfectly in all thoſe whom he loves, *Jer.* 44. 4. *Iſa.* 1. 25. And as he is Holineſs for us, ſo alſo to us, in the Com-

munications of it through Christ. Hence the new Creature in us, which is his Image, is said to be *created in true Holiness*, Eph. 4. 24. And as the first Principle of it is from him, so are all the Increases of it in this Life; and the Perfection of it in the Life to come. All the shining Holiness of Saints and Angels, is but as it were the Reflection of his Glory cast upon 'em. JEHOVAH, Glorious in Holiness, is the infinite Sun, who by darting forth his piercing Rays thro' Christ, in the Place of his immediate Glory-Presence, transforms all the Royal Courtiers that are round his Throne, into this same Image of him, the King of Glory.

Again, Is he the *Omniscient* God, *Psal.* 147. 5. He sees all things for us. And because he sees what is best for us, he gives what is best to us, and that in the best Season. And as he sees what is good for us to bestow it, *Psal.* 8. 12. So he sees what is Evil, or would hurt us to prevent it, *Psal.* 19. 10. He sees the Rage and Malice

Malice of Hell, *Iſa.* 37. 28. the Enmity of wicked Men, the Seed of the Serpent, the Luſtings of the Fleſh againſt the Spirit: And how often doth he diſcover their Plots, and diſappoint their Deſigns? And when he ſuffers their Projects in any Meaſure to take place, he always bounds their Rage, and rules their Madneſs, as he doth the foaming Ocean, *Pſal.* 76. 10. and 89. 9. *Hitherto ſhalt thou come, and no farther: And here ſhall thy proud Waves be ſtaid*, Job 38. 11. And it is becauſe he knows how to make all thoſe *things work together for good*, Rom. 8. 28. which in their own Nature tend to harm us, that he at any time ſuffers our Enemies to prevail. And becauſe he ſees 'em perfectly, as his and our Enemies, he'll deſtroy 'em throughly. *The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the Evil and the Good*, Prov. 15. 3. He beholds the Evil that is in Hell among the Devils, and that is in the Earth among the reprobate Part of Mankind; and he'll *reward* theſe *Evil Doers* that have

been fighting against him and his, *according to their Wickedness*, 2 Sam. 3. 39. And *make them as a fiery Oven in the time of* his *Anger*; when he *swallows them up in* his *Wrath*, Psal. 21. 9. Yea, his omniscient Eyes, behold all the Evil that is in the Hearts and Lives of his Children, *Hos.* 5. 3. and therefore he'll *chastise* 'em for it *in Measure*, Psal. 89. 32. Isa. 27. 8. *Purge* 'em from it more and more here; and root the very Being of it out of their Nature hereafter, *Ver.* 9. *Rev.* 21. 27. And as it's the Saints Privilege that he beholds the Evil to destroy it; so that he beholds the *Good* to maintain and reward it, *Phil.* 1. 6. 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. Wicked Men are so blinded by Sin and Satan, that they can't see the Saints Goodness; but are ready to charge them as Hypocrites. And how oft doth Satan represent the matter thus to themselves? While their own unbelieving Hearts are apt to join with him. So that at times they know not what to think of it, when in the Views of their own Vileness; but are ready

ready to fear, that there never was any thing truly good, either wrought in 'em, or done by 'em. But the omniſcient God, ſees all that Good which was the Work of his own Spirit in 'em, and which by his Aſſiſtance they have been enabled to act either in Heart or Life: And will therefore own and crown it *in the Day of Chriſt*, 1 Pet. 1. 7. He'll not ſuffer the Saints Goodneſs to be loſt, in thoſe Miſts of Darkneſs that have been raiſed to obſcure it; either by evil Angels, evil Men, or that evil Principle of Unbelief, in the Hearts of his Children; but he will *bring forth* their *Righteouſneſs as the Light*, (or as the Sun from under all its Eclipſes,) *and their Judgment as the Noon-day*, Pſal. 37. 6.

Again, Is our God the omnipreſent Being, *Pſal.* 139. 7, 8, 9. and *Jer.* 23. 24. He fills all things for us: The World with his general, the Church with his gracious, and Heaven with his glorious Preſence; yea, and Hell with his wrathful Preſence, in a way

of

of just Revenge, of all that Malice and Hatred, they have shewn towards his Children.

And is JEHOVAH, immense, incomprehensible, unchangeable, and eternal, in his Goodness, Love, Mercy, Grace, and Glory; in his Light, Life, Power, and Wisdom; in his Justice, and Holiness; in his Omniscience, and Omnipresence; and as such the Portion of his Children: Oh how vast is their Inheritance! They have All in GOD, for their All, in having Him as the God of all Grace and Glory for their Inheritance. For all the Perfections of God's Nature, are jointly concern'd in projecting, carrying on, and finishing this vast Design of his free Grace; which in the Perfection of it will open in the Heighths of eternal Glory. And therefore when the Saints, as *Vessels prepar'd for Glory*, Rom. 9. 23. are made to *comprehend*, that is, to hold, in their Measure, that Love which is incomprehensible in itself; and so to know its *Heights* and *Depths*, which are infinitely past Knowledge;

they

they are ſaid to be *filled with all the Fullneſs of God*: In as much as all the Divine Perfections, appear for us in Chriſt, in this one Form of Love, *Eph.* 3. 18, 19.

Thus the Children of God ſhould live upon him as their Portion, with reſpect to the Work of Grace in 'em. We may well be *confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun* it, will alſo carry it on *until the Day of Chriſt*, Phil. 1. 6. ſince all the Divine Attributes are engaged in this Deſign.

The Inheritance of the Sons of God, lies in Grace and Glory: And thus it ſpecifically differs from the Portion of all other Men. 'Tis true, indeed, that the Saints, in having God for their Portion, have him comprehenſively; as the God of Nature, as well as the God of Grace and Glory; and as ſuch he is the Fountain of their natural Supplies, Pſal. 111. 5. and in that they are *Heirs with Chriſt*, Rom. 8. 17. who is *Heir of all things*, Heb. 1. 2. they have a Right to all things in this *World*, 1 Cor. 3. 22. yet ſo, as that their

of juſt Revenge, of all that Malice and Hatred, they have ſhewn towards his Children.

And is JEHOVAH, immenſe, incomprehenſible, unchangeable, and eternal, in his Goodneſs, Love, Mercy, Grace, and Glory; in his Light, Life, Power, and Wiſdom; in his Juſtice, and Holineſs; in his Omniſcience, and Omnipreſence; and as ſuch the Portion of his Children: Oh how vaſt is their Inheritance! They have All in GOD, for their All, in having Him as the God of all Grace and Glory for their Inheritance. For all the Perfections of God's Nature, are jointly concern'd in projecting, carrying on, and finiſhing this vaſt Deſign of his free Grace; which in the Perfection of it will open in the Heighths of eternal Glory. And therefore when the Saints, as *Veſſels prepar'd for Glory*, Rom. 9. 23. are made to *comprehend*, that is, to hold, in their Meaſure, that Love which is incomprehenſible in itſelf; and ſo to know its *Heights* and *Depths*, which are infinitely paſt Knowledge;

they

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their

their Portion, eſpecially, lies in Grace and Glory. This being that Inheritance, or Kingdom that was *prepared for them*, Mat. 25. 34. and all natural Bleſſings are but as things that are *added*, as ſubſervient Means to that great End, *Ch.* 6. 33. Our God, indeed, *gives us all things* in this World *richly to enjoy*, 1 Tim. 6. 17. Even all that his infinite Wiſdom ſees beſt for us, as the Means of our comfortable Subſiſtence in a natural Life; but this is in order to our being filled with ſpiritual, and fitted for eternal Life. 'Tis the enriching us with all Grace and Glory, is the great Deſign our Father's Heart is engaged in: And all natural Bleſſings are afforded, or reſtrained, as either doth moſt conduce to this great End. The Lord never empties his Children of earthly Bleſſings, but in order to fill 'em with heavenly, *Hoſ.* 2. 6, 7. And when he cuts ſhort their Enjoyment of outward Favours, he doth not in the leaſt infringe their Right to all things: But ſo diſpoſeth of them in the Infinity of his Wiſdom,

as

as to make them ſubſerve all the Ends of his Glory, in the greateſt Advantage of his Children. So that the pooreſt Saint, *as having nothing* in an Eye of Senſe, may yet by Faith *poſſeſs all things*, 2 Cor. 6. 10. for *All* that our Father hath is ours, *Luke* 15. 31. And it's our unſpeakable Privilege that our God hath the chuſing of our Portion, *Pſal.* 47. 4. we may hence be ſure, that as he will always give us what is *good* in itſelf, *Pſal.* 85. 11. ſo in the beſt Way and Time, when it ſhall do us the greateſt Kindneſs, *Iſa.* 30. 18. So that it's impoſſible we ſhould *want any good thing*, to make us truly bleſſed in this World; or perfectly glorious in the World to come, *Pſal.* 34. 10. Thus having given ſome broken Hints, What the Inheritance of the Sons of God is; I come to enquire,

Thirdly, When it was made theirs. In anſwer to which, we may obſerve, That

It was very early ſettled upon them. For all *Grace* was *given* them *in Chriſt before the World began*, 2 Tim. 1. 9.

The

The Children of God, were *blessed with all spiritual Blessings in the Heavenlies, according as* they are *chosen in Christ before the Foundation of the World*, Eph. 1. 3, 4. *Eternal Life*, which is the whole of their Inheritance was given 'em by *Promise, even before the World began*, Tit. 1. 2. That *Kingdom* of which the Sons of God are Heirs, was *prepared for them from the Foundation of the World*, Mat. 25. 34. The Inheritance of the Sons of God in general, and every Child's *Lot*, Dan. 12. 13. and Portion in particular, was got ready for 'em, and settled upon them, in the Preparations of infinite Wisdom and Grace, from the Foundation of the World, in its first Creation: That was done before this begun. God's *Works* of Grace *were finished* in his Counsels, and Covenant Settlements, before he gave Being to the Works of Nature, *Heb.* 4. 3. And the Creation, Preservation, and Government of all things in this World, were in Subordination to the Glory of God's Grace, in the Advancement of his

his Children to that Inheritance he ultimately design'd for them, *Heb.* 2.10. So that if we enquire of the Date of God's Loving Kindneſs, in making the Inheritance theirs, we muſt ſay with the *Pſalmiſt*, That *it has been ever of old*, Pſal. 25. 6. In the next Place,

Fourthly, I would enquire, how it was ſettled upon them. In anſwer to which, we may obſerve, That

This Inheritance was ſettled upon the Perſons of God's Children, in Chriſt their Head, by a free, abſolute, irreverſible Grant of the Father. I ſhall take a little Notice, diſtinctly, of the Nature of this Settlement.

1. This Inheritance was ſettled upon the [Perſons] of God's Children. We were firſt choſen to all Bleſſings, then taken into the Relation of Children, in order to their Beſtowment, and then bleſſed in the Settlement of 'em upon us. And as in Election, God did not chooſe Qualities, but Perſons, *Rom.* 9.11, 12, 13. ſo nor in this great Act of Settlement, did *Jehovah* make over himſelf as the Portion of his

his Children, and leave it at Uncertainty (to be determined by the Will and Goodness of the Creature) who these should be. No, *The Foundation of God standeth sure, having this Seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his*, 2 Tim. 2. 19. He knew 'em distinctly from all the World beside, *Jer.* 1. 5. when he wrote down *their Names* in his eternal Choice of 'em, *Luke* 10. 20. And they were as distinctly blessed as chosen, *Eph.* 1. 3. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us*, &c. *according as he hath chosen us*, Ver. 4. *Having predestinated us*, &c. *Ver.* 5. He hath Blessed [Us] saith the Apostle, even the same [Us] which he did choose, and predestinate. Thus, *Rom.* 8. 30. *Moreover, Whom he did predestinate, Them he also called: And Whom he called, Them he also justified: And Whom he justified, Them he also glorified.* And if we take this Word, *Glorified*, to intend either, 1. The Settlement, or, 2. The Conveyance of a glorious Inheritance, or both, it will afford a full Proof to the Point in Hand: That God

God hath glorify'd none but those whom he eternally Predestinated unto Life. They were all *Known by* [*Name*] in God's Electing, and adopting Love, who, in the Settlement of this Inheritance, *have found Grace in his Sight.* Exod. 33. 17.

2. This Inheritance was settled upon the Sons of God, as standing [In] Christ their Head. It pleased the Father to *give* Christ *to be the Head of the Church*, and in him, as such, they were both *Chosen* and Bless'd, *Eph.* 1. 22. *ver.* 3. 4. This great new Covenant-Grant, of God, as the Portion of his Children, was first made to Christ as the Covenant-Head; who was constituted *the everlasting Father*, Isa. 9. 6. of that Remnant that were Chosen in him, and *given* to him, as his Seed and Children, *Heb.* 2. 13. and then to us in him as our great Representative. And thus the Covenant ran, *to thee and to thy Seed*, with *Abraham*, Gen. 17. 7. and with *David*: Psal. 18. 50. who were Typical of Christ and his Seed. God, is first the God of Christ; and then

then our God in him. Chriſt is the eldeſt Son, the *Firſt-born* of the Family, *Rom.* 8. 29. and as ſuch the Prime-Heir; though we as younger Brethren are made *Joint-Heirs with* him, of the ſame Glorious Inheritance, *Ver.* 17. This ſeems to be intimated in that Meſſage our Lord ſent his Diſciples juſt after his Reſurrection, *I aſcend*, ſays he, *to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God*, John 20. 17. Firſt [My] God, in that I have a more immediate, and tranſcendent Intereſt in Jehovah, as my Portion; as I am his Firſt-born Son: And then [Your] God, as you are made Heirs with me, as his younger Children. My God and your God, in one and the ſame Covenant: Yet ſo, as that the Grant of this Inheritance, was originally and tranſcendently made to me; and then to you in me: So that yours is a derived Intereſt, from mine. And as this Inheritance was ſetteled upon the Perſons of God's Children, as ſtanding in Chriſt their Head: ſo

3. It

3. It was by a Grant of the Father. *In hope of eternal Life, which God that cannot Lie, promis'd before the World began*, Tit. 1. 2. Promis'd, or granted by Promiſe, to Chriſt and all his Seed. And this Grant was, 1. Free. 2. Abſolute. And 3. Irreverſible.

1. *Free.* God took no Motives from without himſelf herein. 'Twas the Sovereign *good Pleaſure of his own Will*, going forth in a Way of Free-Love, that was the original Cauſe of this Grant, both to Chriſt and us. *Eph.* 1. 3, 5. The Father's Love to Chriſt, in this Reſpect, was the Pattern of his Love to us, *John* 17. 23. *And haſt loved them, [As] thou haſt loved me.*

2. It was *Abſolute*, without Conditions. When the Father firſt ſaid to Chriſt, I will be thy God, and the God of thy Seed, there were no Works included as the Condition of this Grant. For then it had been of the Law, and not of Grace. *For to him that Worketh, the Reward is not reckon'd of Grace, but of Debt*, Rom. 4. 4. Whereas this Inheritance was given by Promiſe. And as

as the Grant of it was Free and Abſolute, ſo

3. It was *Irreverſible*. And the *Apoſtle* argues its irreverſibleneſs, from the free and abſolute Nature thereof, *Gal.* 3. 17, 18. *And this I ſay, that the Covenant which was confirmed before of God in Chriſt, the Law which was four Hundred and thirty Years after, cannot diſannul, that it ſhould make the Promiſe of none effect. For if the Inheritance be of the Law, it is no more of Promiſe; but God gave it to Abraham by Promiſe.*

Now, as I conceive, we are to look upon *Abraham, the Father of the Faithful*, Rom. 4. 16. with whom God made Covenant, as a Type of Chriſt; who was conſtituted the *everlaſting Father* of all God's Choſen, who were given to him as his Seed and Offspring; with whom God's everlaſting Covenant was originally, and ſubſtantially made. And as *all Nations*, or ſome of all Nations were typically Bleſs'd in *Abraham*, Gal. 3. 8. ſo the Elect among all Nations were ſubſtantially Bleſs'd in Chriſt.

And

And as the Promiſe of the Inheritance was given to *Abraham*, before the Promulgation of the Law at Mount *Sinai*; ſo likewiſe, this Promiſe-Grant, as it was originally made to Chriſt, was above, and before the conſideration of all Laws So that it muſt needs be irreverſible, being thus made by *a God that cannot Lie.* Tit. 1. 2. Who is *not a Man that he ſhould Lie, nor the Son of Man that he ſhould Repent*, Numb. 23. 19. Whoſe *Gifts and Calling are without Repentance*, Rom. 11. 29.

And if this Inheritance was thus ſettled upon the Perſons of God's Children, in Chriſt their Head, by a free, abſolute, irreverſible Grant of the Father; it will neceſſarily follow from hence, that it was impoſſible theſe *Heirs of Promiſe*, Heb. 6. 17. ſhould loſe their Title, or forfeit their Right to this Inheritance, when they Sinn'd in, and Fell with the firſt *Adam*, becauſe it was not put into his Hands; and ſo could not be Loſt, or forfeited by his Sin.

We

We were, indeed, Bless'd in *Adam* with a natural Inheritance, Which did consist in a Perfection of natural and earthly Blessings: and with this Stock he was entrusted. This Portion was put into his Hands for all his Posterity, whom he then Represented. And this Inheritance was not given absolutely; but conditionally. So that if he had continued in his Obedience to his Maker's Law, both himself and his, were to have lived for ever, in that Paradisical Estate he then possest, *Gal.* 3. 12. but if he fail'd herein, nothing but Death and Wrath were to be expected, as *the Wages of Sin*, Rom. 6. 23.

And oh, how soon did *Adam* lose this natural Inheritance, put into his Hands, *Psal.* 49. 12. For though he was a Perfect Man, and had Power to have Stood if he would, *Eccles.* 7. 29. yet being a mutable Creature, and left to the freedom of his own Will, in his own Strength to grapple with the Temptations of the Devil; he quickly fell in with his Suggestions; and turn'd Rebel, and Traitor against his Prince:

by

by which his Eſtate became forfeited to the Crown: And inſtead thereof, all kinds of Death became due to him and his, according to the juſt Penalties of the broken Law of his Sovereign Lord. So that, if the Inheritance of the Sons of God by ſupernatural Grace, had been put into *Adam*'s Hands, it had been loſt: for he loſt all he was entruſted with.

But this was the unſpeakable Privilege of the Children of God, the elect remnant, that they were, not only choſen in *Chriſt*, but, *Bleſſed in Chriſt* too, *Eph.* 1. 3, 4. Our Portion was exceeding ſafe in his Hands: *Our Life* being *hid with Chriſt in God*, Col. 3. 3. So that, tho' we were robbed and ſpoiled of that Portion of goods, our Father gave us in *Adam*, for our accommodation in the lower Room of this World; yet our Jewels, our Treaſure in *Chriſt* were locked up in a ſafe Cabinet; *Reſerved for us in Heaven*, 1 Pet. 1. 4. where *Thieves* could *not break thro' nor ſteal*, Mat. 6. 20. Thoſe terreſtial Bleſſings, we had in the *firſt*

Man, who *was of the Earth earthy*, 1 Cor. 15. 47, 48. we forfeited and lost in his fall; tho' our right thereto is again restored: but our superceleſtial Bleſſings in *Chriſt*, *the heavenly Man*, lay far above all ſpoil.

'Tis true, the adopted Sons of God, did equally with others, by the fall, loſe that Eſtate of Favour, and natural Communion with God, which they had in their Head *Adam*: and by Sin did really deſerve, and bring themſelves under *the Curſe of the Law*, Gal. 3. 10. And in themſelves conſidered, they became obnoxious to the fierce *Wrath* of a Sin-revenging God, *Eph.* 2. 3. which by reaſon of the infinite *Purity* of his Nature, and hatred of Sin, muſt neceſſarily feed upon all Sinners; who are like dry *Stubble* to *devouring Fire*, and fit Fuel for everlaſting Burnings. *Mal.* 4. 1. *Iſa.* 33. 14. So that, if we conſider the Inheritance as antecedently ſettled upon the Sons of God, and ultimately deſigned for them; and then view them as lapſed Creatures, together with the Impoſſibility of Sinners,

ners, as ſuch, being taken into the Enjoyment of God, either in Grace, or Glory, it will make room to enquire.

Fifthly, Which way they come to enjoy their Inheritance. Ay, which way indeed? Had God ſummoned the whole Hoſt of Creatures, and told them, that, from everlaſting, he had ſettled himſelf as a Portion upon a Remnant of Mankind, whom he had loved in his Son; and here withal have laid before them the Difficulties that did occur in carrying on this Deſign, by reaſon of the Fall: Who of them all could have found out a way, to glorify all the divine Perfections in the Salvation of Sinners, from the Depths of Miſery, to the ultimate Heights of their deſigned Glory!

Had God ſtated the matter thus, "How ſhall my Children, that are "now turned Tranſgreſſors, and de-"ſerve my Wrath, ever come to en-"joy that glorious Inheritance I have "ſettled upon them, and reſerved for "them in the greatneſs of my Love? "'Tis true, my Love is the ſame to-

" wards them as ever; and *the*
" *Thoughts of* my *heart*, in my ever-
" lasting Kindness, will abide the same
" *to all Generations*, Ps. 33. 11. Yea,
" *my Covenant* with *Christ* their Head,
" *doth stand fast for evermore*, Ps. 89.
" 28, 34, 35. *Once have I sworn by*
" *my Holiness, and I will not lie unto*
" David; *nor alter the thing that's*
" *gone out of my Mouth.* But *how*
" *shall I put them among the Chil-*
" *dren, and give* them *a pleasant He-*
" *ritage*, Jer. 3. 19. that have thus
" rebelled against me? *I am* JE-
" *HOVAH, and change not*, Mal.
" 3. 6. as not in my Love, so nor
" in any of my infinite Perfections. I
" am a *great*, as well as a gracious
" God, *Isa.* 57. 15. *The high and lofty*
" *one*, whose infinite Majesty they have
" affronted, whose Honour they have
" injured, whose Sovereignty they
" have despised, and have done what
" in them lies to pull me from my
" Throne. And as I am a great, so a
" *just God*, Isa. 45. 21. My Justice
" to my own Greatness, obligeth me

" to

" to do my Being right, for the wrong
" they have done me. And I muſt
" have an infinite Satisfaction, for the
" Injury done to my infinite Majeſty:
" and how muſt I come at this, when lo,
" they have *nothing to pay?* Luke 7.
" 42. Yea, I am juſt and righteous to
" the threatnings of my holy Law:
" the Word is gone out of my Mouth,
" *in the Day thou eateſt thereof, thou*
" *ſhalt ſurely die*, Gen. 2. 17. And I
" am *a God of Truth*, Deut. 32. 4.
" Faithful, and *can't deny* my *ſelf*,
" 2 Tim. 2. 13. as not in the Promiſes
" of my Grace, ſo nor in the threatnings
" of my Law. How then ſhall I give
" Life, to ſuch that are thus ſentenced
" to Death, as the juſt *Wages of Sin?*
" Rom. 6. 23. And as I am a great,
" juſt, and true God, ſo I am a God
" of infinite Holineſs, *Of purer Eyes*
" *than to behold Iniquity*, Hab. 1. 13.
" and cannot look on Sin: And *with-*
" *out Holineſs* it is impoſſible for any *to*
" *ſee God*, Heb. 12. 14. How then
" ſhall I take ſuch filthy, abominable
" Creatures, and ſet them before my

" Face for ever as the Objects of my " eternal Complacency ?"

Had God, I ſay, thus ſtated the Queſtion, and referred it for anſwer, to all the Men that ever have been ſince *Adam*, or ſhall be to the end of the World; how would it have nonplus'd the moſt bright, illuſtrious Souls that have moved in the higheſt Orb of human Underſtanding? None of them all could have given the leaſt Intimation of a Way, in which all the divine Perfections might be glorified, in the Salvation of Sinners.

Nay, ſo far is the Wiſdom of the Fleſh, from contributing any thing to this Deſign, that it always ſtands diametrically oppoſite. *The Redemption of the Souls* of Sinners, was a Work ſo *precious*, that it muſt have *ceaſed for ever*, had either the Contrivance, or Performance of it, in the leaſt depended upon our own Wiſdom or Strength, *Pſ.* 49. 8.

And as this Queſtion would have nonplus'd the whole Poſterity of *Adam*; ſo alſo it would have been far above

above the Sphere of angelick Underſtanding. Neither Angels, nor Archangels, among all their bright Orders, could ever have given God a poſitive Anſwer hereto. No: For tho' theſe pure, piercing, and intelligent Spirits, do move in the higheſt Orb of created Underſtanding; yet none of thoſe bright Seraphs, in all the flaming Glories of their Wiſdom, but muſt here have confeſt their profound Ignorance. So that none of the whole Hoſt of rational Creatures, either in the upper or lower Worlds, could have returned any more than a negative Anſwer to this Queſtion: and muſt have remained in eternal Silence as to the poſitive part of it.

And here, the Project of Eternity, for the Glory of God's Grace, in the Beſtowment of this Inheritance upon his Children, muſt for ever have been ſtopped in the Conveyance, had not infinite Wiſdom ſtept in, and found out a Way in which to carry it on, unto its ultimate Glory Heights in the Perfection of an endleſs Life, thro'

all thoſe vaſt Mazes of Sin, Curſe, Wrath, and Death, thro' which it was to paſs.

Now then, let's reſume the Queſtion, *viz.* which way theſe Sons of God come to enjoy their Inheritance? And hear it anſwered by the Lips of Truth, the eternal WORD, who came down out of the Boſom of the Father, to acquaint us with the Court Record about this Matter.

And, behold, how the Myſtery opens, in him, who is *the Wiſdom of God in a Myſtery*, 1 Cor. 2. 7. *I am the* [Way] ſays *Chriſt*, *no Man cometh unto the Father but by me*, John 14. 6. Here then let's ſtand Agaſt! That our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt* ſhould be the Way, fills the Saints on Earth, with aſtoniſhing Wonder and Joy, Heaven above, with eternal Amazement and higheſt Acclamations, and Hell below, with the blackeſt Horror and everlaſting Confuſion.

But, I would a little enquire, how *Chriſt* is the Way? And he is ſo, 1. In reſpect of Title: 2. In reſpect of Meetneſs:

Meetneſs: And 3. In reſpect of Communication.

1. *Chriſt* is the Way of our Enjoyment of the Inheritance in reſpect of Title. He was the Way in which this Inheritance was firſt ſettled upon us: and ſo our original Title ſtands in him. And he is the Way by which it is conveyed to us by a ſecondary Title: Of which I now ſpeak. And had it not been ſo, we could never have come at the Enjoyment of it, ſo great were the Obſtacles which came in by the Fall. But here, irreſiſtable reigning Grace, which at firſt ſhone gloriouſly in the Settlement of this Inheritance upon the Sons of God, (even in him who was *ſet up from everlaſting*, Prov. 8. 12, 23. as the Wiſdom of the Father, and the great Head of the Church) did again break forth in its triumphant Strength, from under all that Darkneſs that covered it by the Fall, like the Sun from under an Eclipſe, in a new amazing Glory; with an, *I have* [Found] *David my Servant*; *I have laid* [Help] *upon one that is*

mighty, Ps. 89. 19, 20. This mighty Head of the Church, in whom the Inheritance was first settled, shall now become the mighty *Saviour of the Body*, through whom it shall be enjoyed, *Eph.* 5. 23.

And in order hereto, the Father resolved, to *prepare* Christ *a Body*, Heb. 10. 5. demanded, and took Satisfaction at his Hands *for our Offence*, Rom. 4. 25. by making him *Sin for us*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. and consequently *an offering* for our Guilt, *Isa.* 53. 10. Yea, and he did do it in Covenant, from everlasting: from whence, even in Old Testament-times, it's put in the past Tense: *He* [Was] *wounded for our Transgressions*; *he* [Was] *bruised for our Iniquities*; *and the Lord* [Hath] *laid on him the Iniquity of us all*, Isa. 53. 5, 6.

Nor was this done without Christ's Consent: For God the Son, in the Covenant Capacity of Mediator, did from everlasting engage with God the Father, as our Surety, that *in the Fulness of Time*, he would take our Nature, sustain

ſuſtain our Perſons, ſtand in our Law-room, obey and die in our ſtead; to *make Reconciliation for Iniquity, finiſh Tranſgreſſion, bring in an everlaſting Righteouſneſs*, and anſwer all the Ends of the Father's Glory, *Gal.* 4, 4, 5. *Col.* 1. 18. 1 *Pet.* 3. 18. *Dan.* 9. 24.

Whereupon, the Father promiſed, that he would take him *from Priſon and from Judgment*, Iſa. 53. 8. *Raiſe* him *from the Dead*, Acts 13. 34. Acquit him from all Law-Charges, and publickly *juſtify* him as righteous, *Iſa.* 50. 8. in the Name, and Room of all thoſe for whom he engaged, and whom, as their publick Head, he then repreſented, *Rom.* 4. 25. And that upon the Account of his meritorious Blood and Righteouſneſs, he would freely pardon all their Sins, *Eph.* 1. 7. juſtify their Perſons, *Tit.* 3. 7. admit 'em into the higheſt Favour and Fellowſhip, *Rom.* 5. 2. and at laſt compleatly ſave them out of the Hands of all their Enemies, *Iſa.* 45. 17. So that hereupon he ſhould *See, i. e.* Enjoy *his Seed*, in their being raiſed up from the Depths of Miſery, to the

the Heights of Glory, to be for ever with him in the full Enjoyment of their Inheritance, as the Fruit of the *Travail of his Soul*; in which he ſhould be ſatisfied, *Iſa.* 53. 10, 11. For ſo great was the Love of Chriſt, our everlaſting Father, to his Seed and Children, our Elder Brother, to his younger Brethren, our Head and Husband, to the Members of his Body, his Bride and Spouſe, that he could not have been ſatisfied, if he had not been to have had us all about him. Whereupon the Father told him, that he would ſatisfy *his Heart's Deſire*, by giving him to ſee his Seed, *Pſal.* 21. 2.

And further, That upon his Aſcenſion into Heaven, (having finiſhed the Work he gave him to do on Earth) he would advance him to *his own right Hand, far above Principality, and Power, and Might, and Dominion, and every Name that is named, not only in this World, but in that which is to come*, Eph. 1. 20, 21. That *in the Name of Jeſus every Knee ſhou'd bow, and every Tongue confeſs* his univerſal Lordſhip, and

and ſovereign Dominion, as having all *Power* committed to him, as King of Saints, and King of Nations, *Phil.* 2. 10, 11.

And further, the Father told him, That as the Reward of his Obedience, he would *give* him *the Heathen for his Inheritance, the uttermoſt Parts of the Earth for his Poſſeſſion*, Pſal. 2. 8. And that he ſhould not only for a Time, govern all things in his vaſt Empire of this World, by a Secret, though an Almighty Hand; ſetting up, and pulling down at Pleaſure; Managing all the Affairs of Providence in a real, though inviſible Glory, by his Miniſters of State, the Angels. But that alſo, at the appointed time, he would, in an open and viſible Manner, give him *the Throne of his Father* David, *Luke* 1. 32. *Dominion, Glory, and a Kingdom, that all People, Nations, and Languages* might *Serve him*, Dan. 7. 14. And that he would ſet his *many Crowns* upon his Head, *Rev.* 19. 12. and in all his Royalty make a *Shew* of him openly, to Saints and Angels,

Angels, Men and Devils, as *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, the only Potentate*, and Ruler of Princes, 1 *Tim.* 6. 15. And that when he himſelf ſhould thus *take* the *Power, and Reign*, *Rev.* 11. 17. all Nations ſhould *bow before him, and his Enemies lick the Duſt*, Pſ. 72. 9, 11. all the People ſeeing his Glory, to the Terror of Hell, and the *confounding all* thoſe that *ſerve Graven Images*, Pſ. 97. 6, 7. While Heaven and Earth, harmoniouſly ſing his Praiſe, as the *Judge of quick and dead, at* this *his Appearing and Kingdom*, 2 Tim. 4. 1. proclaiming *the Lamb, worthy to receive Bleſſing and Honour, Glory, Wiſdom, Riches, and Strength*, Rev. 5. 12.

Nor was *Chriſt* to have all this Glory as the juſt Reward of his meritorious Sufferings for himſelf only, but for us alſo; according to the decreed Proportion of Head and Members: ſo that, having obtained Life, Glory, and a Kingdom, by the infinite Worth of his Obedience unto Death; he was to be the Donor of this *Life*, Glory, and Kingdom,

Kingdom, as being his own Right by Price, *to as many as the Father gave him*, John 17. 2, 22. And thus *Christ Jesus*, as the Saviour, was verily *fore-ordained* to be the Way, in which the adopted Sons of God, as conſidered Sinners, ſhould enjoy their Inheritance, 1 *Pet.* 1. 20.

And not only from everlaſting, was he fore-appointed, in *Jehovah*'s Counſel and Covenant; but in the fulneſs of Time, he did actually come down, and perform all his Covenant-engagements; by anſwering the Demands of Law and Juſtice: and ſo removed all the Objections, that could be made againſt our Enjoyment of the Inheritance, upon the Account of our being Sinners.

And having paid our Debts, he aſcended to Heaven, demanded entrance, and was admitted into Glory both for himſelf, and all his; as that which in ſtrict Juſtice was due to his Obedience. Thus the Sons of God come to enjoy their Inheritance by Purchaſe-right.

The Inheritance, as was before obſerved,

ſerved, is, God himſelf, as the God of all Grace and Glory, eſſentially, proviſionally, and communicatively conſidered. Grace and Glory eſſentially conſidered, are God's Nature: and in this firſt Senſe, I think they cannot be ſaid, to be purchaſed: nor yet in the ſecond: for the Proviſion of Grace and Glory, in Counſel and Covenant, was an Act of God's Will; and ſo can't be ſaid to be purchaſed; but it was, *the Father*'s mere *good Pleaſure to give the Kingdom*, Luke 12. 32. It remains then, that in the *third* and laſt Senſe, only, we are to apprehend the Inheritance as purchaſed: that is, the Communication of all Grace and Glory unto us.

And that the Inheritance, in this Senſe, is purchaſed, is clear to me, from the Nature of *Chriſt*'s Obedience and Reward. Our Lord's Obedience, in emptying himſelf of Glory, by reaſon of the Dignity of his Perſon, had an infinite Value in it; which did deſerve all the Grace and Glory, that were to be given out to him and his

to

to Eternity. And as there was an intrinsick, so also an extrinsick Worth in it; by virtue of the Father's Covenant, to give him all Grace and Glory, as the just Reward of his Obedience.

And thus our Lord, prayed the Father to *glorify* him, upon his having *finished the Work* he gave him to do. *I have glorified thee on Earth: I have finished the Work thou gavest me to do.* Whereupon he proceeds, *And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the Glory which I had with thee before the World was*, John 17. 4, 5. Having finished the Work of his Humiliation, for the Salvation of Sinners, (in the active part of it, and just entering upon the passive part, with full Resolution to become *obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross*, Phil. 2. 8. Both which are put into the word *finished*) and therein fulfilled his own Covenant-engagements; he prays the Father to fulfil this, in glorifying of him, in his humbled Man-nature; by exalting him to his own right Hand, and installing him openly,

ly, into all that vast Dignity, he had with him secretly, in the Covenant before the World was.

Our Lord Christ, as I conceive, had all his Mediatorial Glory, originally settled upon his Person, as God-Man, the Head of the Church, by an absolute Grant of the Father's free Love, in the Grace-part of the Covenant, answerable to Upper-fall Designs.

And, Again he had all this Glory given him by Promise as his Due, upon the Account of his worthy Undertaking to become the Saviour of the Body, in the Redemption-part of the Covenant, agreeable to the under-fall Counsels. And in both these Respects our Lord Jesus, had all this Glory with the Father before the World was.

In the *first* Sense, he pray'd for the Communication of it, having finish'd the Work which the Father gave him to do: In as much as infinite Wisdom upon the Account of the Fall, did appoint him to pass through *Sufferings* before

before he thus *entered into his Glory*, Luke 24. 26.

In the *second* Sense, he pray'd for it as the juſt Reward of his Work.

Chriſt's vaſt Inheritance in God, with all thoſe Revenues of Glory, which ariſe from his being admitted into the higheſt Glory Communion with JEHOVAH, anſwerable to his tranſcendent Union; And alſo from his univerſal Dominion over all Creatures, as Head of Nature, Grace, and Glory; were all originally ſettled upon his Perſon of mere Grace! And of theſe Riches the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 *Cor.* 8. 9. *For ye know the Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that though he was rich, yet for your ſakes he became poor*, &c. 'Tis evident to me, he here ſpeaks of Chriſt's Riches, as originally ſettled upon his Perſon, as God-Man, Mediator, by the Father's Free Grace; in that he makes 'em antecedent to his Poverty: For as theſe ſame Riches were given him as the juſt Reward of his Obedience, they became not his Due, as ſuch, until he had ſo obey'd.

And

And as in this *Text* the *Apostle* asserts his Riches before his Poverty: So on the other Hand he declares, that all his glorious Dignity, was given him as the just Reward of his deep Humility. *Wherefore God hath highly exalted him*, &c. Phil. 2. 9. *And to him that worketh*, he says, *the Reward is not reckoned of Grace, but of Debt*, Rom. 4. 4. Now Christ did really work for Life: And his Reward, as such, take it in the largest Sense, was not of Grace, but of Debt.

And thus I humbly conceive, that *Christ*, the first born Son, the prime Heir, and we the younger Brethren, as joint Heirs with him, shall for ever enjoy God as our everlasting Portion, in the same Way of Interest and Propriety. Our original Right lies in the Father's Gift: Our secondary Right in the Son's Purchase. Our original Title by the Father's Gift, stands in absolute Grace both to *Christ* and us too. Our secondary Title by the Son's Purchase, stands in Justice to *Christ*, by reason of that valuable Price he paid

paid into the Hands of his Father: Ay, and in Juſtice to us too, in as much as the Price was paid upon our Account. Though it was pure Grace that both provided, and accepted of it for us. And ſo indeed there is a Difference: For *Chriſt* enjoys the Inheritance in this ſecondary Title, as his own proper Deſert: We only as intereſted in his Merit: So that in both Reſpects it is of Grace to us, in the firſt only to *Chriſt*.

Our original Title by the Father's Gift, we never loſt, nor mar'd by Sin; tho' thereby we laid ourſelves under the greateſt Impoſſibilities of enjoying our Portion. But this was our unſpeakable Privilege, that we were not left as ſingle Creatures, to ſtand *alone*, Eccleſ. 4. 10. but being in Relation to *Chriſt*, when we fell, there was *one to help* us *up*: even our ſtrong Lord *Jeſus*, who had before engaged to open a Way for all Grace and Glory, to flow unto us through his own bleeding Wounds: And ſo fully redeem us to the Enjoyment of our Inheritance, to which

which we had an indefeasible Right. And to do this also in such a Way, as thereby to make us another Title, for our farther Confirmation and Consolation: That so we might inherit Glory upon a double Right.

And thus he founds his Intercession-pleas, as our righteous Advocate with the Father. He pleads for our full Deliverance from all Evil, Preservation from all Dangers, and compleat Glorification with himself for ever: First, upon the bottom of Grace, and then of Justice.

Father, says he, *I pray for those thou hast given me*, first as they are [Thine] in Electing, Adopting, and Settlement-Grace: And so I ask but according to thine own Heart, and what in the Riches of thy Grace, thou hast already Provided for 'em; and in the unchangeableness of thy Love, canst not but bestow upon them: *For thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me*, John 17. 9, 23. And as I Pray for these as Thine, upon the bottom of thy Free-Love, so again, I pray for 'em

as

as [Mine] both by Gift and Purchaſe, *ver.* 10. and not only have I a Right to their Perſons, but alſo unto all that Glory which they ſhall enjoy. And ſo in ſtrict Juſtice thou canſt not deny my Requeſts for them: For upon this very bottom *I* [*Will*] *Father, that they be with me where I am, to behold my Glory*, ver. 24. And thus he gives *Eternal Life, to as many as the Father gave him*, ver. 2. Having made them *Rich*, (or made them a Title, to all the Riches of their vaſt Inheritance,) by his own *Poverty*, 2 Cor. 8. 9. 'Tis in this Senſe, That being *juſtified by Grace, we are made Heirs according to the Hope of eternal Life*, Tit. 3. 7.

And by the way, I think that theſe things, being thus conſider'd, may ſerve in ſome meaſure to reconcile the different Opinions of thoſe Perſons, who on the one hand aſſert, That the Saints have their Inheritance by virtue of the Father's Gift of it to 'em in Chriſt; which they never loſt by the Fall; although it was impoſſible that as Sinners, they ſhould enjoy it, until Chriſt

Chriſt by his Death had remov'd all Obſtacles out of the Way: But they don't think that they have it by Right of Purchaſe, becauſe their Title by Gift was never loſt. And again thoſe other Perſons, who on the contrary aſſert, That the Saints Title to their Inheritance, ſtands in the Purchaſe of Chriſt. For though thoſe that are for Title by Purchaſe, do generally miſs it, in that they apprehend, That Heaven and eternal Glory were contain'd in the Promiſe of Life by the Law, as it was given out to *Adam*: And ſo, that all his Poſterity did loſe it by his Fall: And Chriſt purchaſing it for the Elect, their original Title ſtands in his Purchaſe; and in the Father's Gift only as conſequent thereupon. In this, indeed, they miſs it: And here the firſt are right, who ſay, that they did not loſe their Title to the Inheritance, by the Father's Gift, when *Adam* fell: Becauſe it was abſolutely ſettled upon 'em in Chriſt, above the Conſideration of the Fall, and never put into *Adam*'s Hands. But yet, this hinders not

there

there being a Truth in what the other ſay, when they aſſert Title by Purchaſe, If taken in a right Senſe. For I don't ſee but both are very conſiſtent; if the firſt Title be plac'd in the Father's Gift, and the ſecond in the Sons of Purchaſe.

But here, perhaps, ſome may be ready to ſtart a Queſtion, and ask me, What need there was for this Title by Purchaſe, if our Title by Gift was never loſt?

Which I ſhall anſwer, by putting another Queſtion to theſe Queriſts: *viz.* What need was there of *Two immutable Things*, God's Oath, and his Word? *Hebrews* 6. 18. Was not his Word ſufficient for the *Confirmation* and *Conſolation of the Heirs of Promiſe*, ſeeing he is a *God that cannot lie?* Tit. 1. 2. Yea, ſurely they can't ſay but it was. And yet it was the Pleaſure of God, not only to paſs his great Word, but alſo to *Swear* by his great *Self*, for this End, as the *Apoſtle* declares, *that the Heirs of Promiſe might have ſtrong Conſola-*

tion, Heb. 6, 13, 18. So ſay I in this reſpect: Our firſt Title by Gift was ſo firm, as that our Inheritance was eternally ſecur'd by it: and had it been the Pleaſure of God, this [Alone] had been ſufficient for our Enjoyment of the ſame. God might have created us, and at once have taken us up into the Enjoyment of himſelf, upon this bottom only; and never have ſuffer'd Sin to enter. But it was the Pleaſure of JEHOVAH, to permit the Fall, 1. To glorify his Grace the more, in giving his Son to die for us: And not only redeem us to the Enjoyment of the Inheritance; but alſo to make us another Title; that ſo we might inherit Glory upon a double Right. And as it was for the Glory of the Father, ſo 2. For the Glory of the Mediator. The Dignity of his Perſon, as the great High-prieſt and Sacrifice, the Greatneſs of his Love and Grace, Power and Faithfulneſs, reſplendently ſhining forth herein. And 3. It was alſo for our Advantage: For the corroborating of

of our first Title, and for the strengthning of our Faith, who are Expectants of this Inheritance, which we shall enjoy through our Lord Jesus Christ, as he is our [Way] in respect of Title.

But having been so large in this first Part of my Answer to that Query, *viz.* Which Way the Sons of God come to the Enjoyment of their Inheritance, I must endeavour Brevity in what remains. To proceed then,

2. Our Lord Christ is the Way in respect of Meetness. That the Sons of God, as consider'd Sinners, might come to the Enjoyment of their Inheritance; there was a Necessity, not only that the Guilt of Sin should be taken off their Persons, but also that the Filth of it should be removed out of their Nature: For they that *Ascend the Hill of God*, and *stand in* his *holy Place*, must have *clean Hands* and *a pure Heart*, Psal. 24. 3, 4. We had indeed, all at once, a mystical cleansing from all Sin, both in the Guilt and Filth of it, upon the great Day of At-

tonement, when our Lord *put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himſelf*, Heb. 9. 26. and roſe from the dead, diſcharged from all our Debts, and compleatly juſtify'd in our Name and Room, *Rom.* 4. 25. And this myſtical cleanſing is the Foundation of that perſonal Cleanſing, of which I here intend to ſpeak.

Our Lord declares, that the Bleſſing of *Seeing*, i. e. enjoying God, belongs to ſuch that are *Pure in Heart*, Mat. 5. 8. And no *Unclean* Thing can be admitted into his Glory-Preſence, *Rev.* 21. 27. For *how can two walk together unleſs they be agreed?* Amos 3. 3. God is *Light*, 1 John 1. 5. And an unregenerate Man is *Darkneſs*, And *what Fellowſhip hath Light with Darkneſs?* or what Communion can a holy God have with an unholy Soul? 2 *Cor.* 6. 14. For though the Guilt of Sin was taken away by the Death of Chriſt; and ſo Juſtice is ſatisfy'd that we ſhould have our Inheritance; and alſo oblig'd to give us the Enjoyment of it: Yet ſtill there was a Neceſſity that the Filth of Sin alſo, ſhould be taken away by

Power,

Power, in the Virtue of its being taken away by Price; that ſo God's Holineſs might not oppoſe our neareſt Approaches to him, and Enjoyment of him. And as there was a Neceſſity, on God's Part, that Sin ſhould be taken out of our Nature, in order to his full Communion with us; ſo alſo on our Part, in order to our full Enjoyment of him. For if it was poſſible, that an unholy Soul could be taken up to the Place of Glory, yet Heaven would be no Heaven to him; not having an holy Principle, he could not enjoy the State of Glory: The Beauties of its flaming Holineſs, would rather conſume, than delight him.

There being then a Neceſſity, that all the Heirs of Glory, ſhould firſt be made *meet* for, before they are made *Partakers of*, their *Inheritance in Light*, Col. 1. 12. Our Lord Chriſt becomes the Way in reſpect of Meetneſs: And this as he is our Grace-Head. *For it pleaſed the Father that in him all Fulneſs ſhould dwell*, Col. 1. 19. that *of his Fulneſs we might receive, and Grace*

for Grace, John 1. 16. Chriſt is *made of God unto us Sanctification*, as well as *Righteouſneſs*, 1 Cor. 1. [illegible]. And the Sons of God, in and by Chriſt, have a two-fold Meetneſs for their Inheritance.

1. We have a Repreſentative-Meetneſs in the Perſon of Chriſt. Which conſiſts in the inherent Holineſs of his Nature being imputed to us, and we look'd upon by an holy God, as perfectly Holy in the ſhining Glories of our holy Head, *Col.* 1. 22. 1 John 4. 17. And,

2. We have an Influential-Meetneſs in our own Perſons, by and from Chriſt. Which conſiſts, 1. In the Communication of an holy Principle from Chriſt, our holy Root, by his Holy Spirit, in the Work of Regeneration. And, 2. In all thoſe after-Supplies of Grace, which we receive continually from Chriſt, as our Root of Influence, by the Spirit of Holineſs; as he carries on his begun Work, both in Mortification and Vivification; from our Infant State in Grace, until we *grow up unto a perfect Man, to the Meaſure*

Meaſure of the Stature of the Fulneſs of Chriſt, Eph. 4. 13. And then in our Soul-part, we are made perfectly meet for the Inheritance, Chriſt's Grace-Image, having been compleatly form'd in us, and we, in this reſpect, wrought into a full Conformity to the Son of God, under the new Creation-Work of the Holy Ghoſt; Who all along wrought by Rule, while he kept his Eye upon Chriſt, the glorious Pattern; and drew every Part of the new Creature, in all its Grace-features, exactly according to the beautiful Lineaments which were firſt drawn in Chriſt.

Thus Chriſt is our Way in reſpect of Meetneſs, as it concerns our Souls: I ſhould alſo hint ſomething of his being the Way in this reſpect, as it regards our Bodies. For Glory being ſettled upon our whole Man, and the Body to be taken up into a joint Participation of it with the Soul, There is a Neceſſity, that it ſhould firſt be fitted for, before it is taken up into Glory.

The Apoſtle tells us, *that Fleſh and Blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 15. 50. The Meaning of which, I humbly conceive is this, that Fleſh and Blood, in its natural, mortal, and corruptible Eſtate, cannot inherit Glory: Becauſe, as ſuch, it is no way capable of it. And we being *in* our *Fleſh* to *ſee God*, Job. 19. 26. and to dwell in his Preſence for ever, in the Glory of the heavenly State: Hence there was a Neceſſity, that all thoſe impediments ſhould be removed out of the Way, which came in by our being put into a firſt *Adam*, and permitted to fall in his firſt Sin: And ſo to derive our Nature from him, who was the common Stock, or Fountain of it, in all its Weakneſs, Mortality, and Corruptibility: Which render it incapable to enjoy Glory. *Foraſmuch then as the Children were Partakers of Fleſh and Blood*, Chriſt *alſo himſelf took part of the ſame*, being *made like unto his Brethren in all Things*, Sin only excepted: That ſo he might make them like him, in which

their

their Meetneſs for Glory conſiſts, *Heb.* 2. 14, 17.

The divine Perſon of the Son of God, took our Nature, in all its ſinleſs Frailties, into perſonal Union with himſelf; that ſo he might exalt it above the Sphere of its own natural Weakneſs; and free it from all thoſe ſinleſs Infirmities, ſuch as Hunger, Thirſt, and Wearineſs, ariſing from a Decay of vital Spirits; together with that liableneſs to Sorrow and Death, which attended it even in its pure State. Nor did our Lord *Chriſt*, by this Aſſumption, as he is our *heavenly* Head, 1 Cor. 15. 48. free our Nature only, from all thoſe ſinleſs Frailties which attended the Man *Adam*, in his paradiſical State, as he was of an earthy Make: But

Further, alſo, *Chriſt*, as our great Saviour, in his aſſumed Nature, has *born our Sins*, 1 Pet. 2. 24. was *made a Curſe for us*, Gal. 3. 13. endured divine Wrath, *Mark* 15. 34. and died in our Room, 1 *Pet.* 3. 18. and by the Merit of his Death, has given us

the Victory over Death, even as it reſpects our Bodies, 1 *Cor.* 15. 57. For though the Bodies of the Saints are ſtill ſubject to all Kind of Diſeaſes in this Life, Death itſelf, with Putrefaction and Rottenneſs in the Grave, and all this in common with others: yet this hinders not but that the Saints [Now] have the Victory over Death, as they ſtand in *Chriſt* their conquering Head: Who has already deſtroyed Death in its Root and Principle, 2 *Tim.* 1. 10. ſo that there remains no *curſe* in their ſharpeſt Afflictions, *Gal.* 3. 13. nor any *ſting* in their Death, 1 *Cor.* 15. 55. Yea, he has already deſtroyed Death in its very Being, in his own Perſon, as our great Repreſentative, when he roſe from the dead, as a triumphant Conqueror over Death, and *became the firſt Fruits, of them that ſleep*, ver. 20. So that *Chriſt* being *raiſed from the Dead, dieth no more, Death hath no more Dominion over him*, Rom. 6. 9. No, nor over us as repreſented in him. For we were all myſtically *raiſed up together with him*, Eph. 2. 6.

and

and had a Repreſentative Meetneſs for Glory, in the Reſurrection-Body of *Chriſt*. And we ſhall alſo, e're long, have an influential Meetneſs in our own Bodies, when by virtue of Union to him, who is *the Reſurrection and the Life*, Joh. 11. 25. they ſhall be raiſed from the Dead, *ſpiritual, immortal, and incorruptible*, 1 Cor. 15. 44, 45. every way *faſhioned like unto* Chriſt's *glorious Body*, Phil. 3. 21. And then in our whole Man we ſhall compleatly *bear the Image of the heavenly*, 1 Cor. 15. 49. (which will be a far higher Glory, than the firſt Man was capable of in his earthly State:) And ſo ſhall be made perfectly Meet, for the full Enjoyment of our glorious Inheritance.

And when thus our entire Perſons, ſhall be made perfect in Holineſs, without the leaſt Adheſion of a Stain, not ſo much as the Shadow of a Spot of Sin being left in us: yet even then, this influential Meetneſs in us, ſhall be as it were ſwallowed up in our Repreſentative Meetneſs in *Chriſt*: I mean,

mean, in reſpect of its Acceptance with God; while he complacently looks upon our perfect perſonal Holineſs, thro' the ſpotleſs Purity, and ſplendid Holineſs of his own Son. Thus the holy Members, in and with their holy Head, ſhall for ever ſtand *holy, and without blame before* God *in Love*, Eph. 1. 4. or in the Love-Delights of an eternal Glory-Communion with *JEHOVAH*. Thus *Chriſt* is our Way, in reſpect of Meetneſs. Again,

3. *Chriſt* is the Way, in which the Sons of God come to enjoy their Inheritance in reſpect of Communication: *Chriſt was ſet up from everlaſting*, as the great Mediator between God and all his Creatures, even in *the beginning of his Way, before his Works of Old*, Prov. 8. 22, 23, &c. When God went forth by his wiſe Counſels and firm Decrees, into Creature-Converſe, *Chriſt* was then by him, as the great *Medium*, in and thro' whom it was to be held. All divine Communications were firſt made unto *Chriſt*, as Head

of

of Nature, Grace, and Glory, and ſo through him are made unto all Creatures, in their Nature, Grace, and Glory-Relations. The being and well-being of Creatures, are but a Derivation out of his Fulneſs. *For by him were all things created that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, viſible and inviſible, whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers*, Col. 1. 16. And as all things were made by him, ſo *by him* alſo *all things do conſiſt*, ver. 17. and are fixedly held together, in all thoſe Enjoyments which their diſtinct Natures, and different Conditions do admit of. *Chriſt* is an interpoſing Mediator between God and all his Creatures: And would have been ſo if Sin had never entered. The holy Angels in Heaven, receive all their Glory from God, thro' *Chriſt*, as the *Medium* of Communication: And ſtand everlaſtingly fixed in their high Stations, by virtue of his being their confirming Head. And *Chriſt* is alſo an atoning

atoning Mediator between God and Elect-Sinners: And in both respects he is the *Medium* of all Glory-Communications to us. 'Tis *in the Face*, or Person, *of Christ*, 2 Cor. 4. 6. that the Saints now see the Glory of the Father: And that Knowledge of God in which *eternal Life*, and the highest Enjoyment of our Inheritance consists, *John* 17. 3. will for ever flow unto us in the same Way; For *eternal Life*, both as to the Right and Enjoyment of it, is only *in his Son*, 1 John 5. 11.

And it is our unspeakable Privilege, that when advanced to the highest Glory in Heaven, yet, that even then, we shall not be left to stand there alone, to enjoy God in our own single selves; but shall for ever converse with him in *Christ*, our glorious Head. Our *Inheritance in Light*, consists in the highest Enjoyment of God as he is *Light*: And God in his abstracted Essence *dwelleth in that Light* that is inaccessible, and can only be approach'd to in his Son, 1 *Tim.* 6. 16. God's essential

ſential Glory, is a Light too ſtrong for the Creatures weak Sight, to have any immediate converſe with: And can only be ſeen in the human Nature of *Chriſt*, as the Glaſs of Repreſentation. 'Twill be a *pleaſant Thing* for our Eyes thus *to behold the Sun*, Eccleſ. 11. 7. The Eyes of our glorified Souls, yea, and the ſtrong immortal Eyes of our Bodies too, will be every way fitted to converſe with the Light of the Father's Glory, as it will for ever ſhine, in and thro' the Mediator. The Glory of *JEHOVAH*, will firſt caſt its Rays upon *Chriſt* our glorious Head, and then thro' him, upon us, as the Members of his Body: All our Light will be but as it were the Reflection of his Glory caſt upon us. 1. *In them*, ſays our Lord, *and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one*, John 17. 23.

Thus *Chriſt* is the Way in which the Sons of God, come to enjoy their Inheritance, 1. In reſpect of Title. 2. In reſpect of Meetneſs. And 3. In reſpect of Communication. And in all

all theſe reſpects he is the Way of God's Contrivance and Appointment, to anſwer all the Ends of his Glory in the Salvation of his Children.

Here all the Divine Attributes are perfectly reconciled: *Mercy and Truth* are *met together*, *Righteouſneſs and Peace have kiſſed each other*, Pſal. 85. 10. Well may Chriſt's Name be called *Wonderful*, Iſa. 9. 6. His Perſon is wonderful in its Conſtitution, his Offices wonderful in their Deſign, the Execution of them wonderful in their Effects; which fills Heaven and Earth with joyful Surprize. The holy Angels with intenſe Deſire, *ſtoop down to look into*, and learn of the Church the manifold Wiſdom of God, as it ſhines forth in the Perſon and Work of our Great *Immanuel*, 1 Pet. 1. 12. and Eph. 3. 10. The Saints, both in the upper and the lower Worlds, caught up into an Extaſy of joyful Wonder, while they look into this *Myſtery* of God *manifeſt in the fleſh*, 1 Tim. 3. 16. break forth as in an heavenly Rapture, with

a *What hath God wrought!* Numb. 23. 23. And when our Lord appears the ſecond time without Sin unto Salvation, he'll come, as to be *glorify'd in his Saints*, ſo to be *admir'd in all them that believe*, 2 Theſ. 1. 10. We ſhall then admire Chriſt in himſelf, as having the moſt compleat Revelation of his Glory: Yea, we ſhall admire him in our ownſelves as being compleatly changed into his Glory-Image: And we ſhall alſo admire him in one another, while we look upon the Saints in all their different Glories, as ſhining forth in the Fulneſs of his Light; who is the Glory-Sun from whence they receive all their ſtarry Luſtre, 1 *Cor.* 15. 41, 42. and *Rev.* 21. 23. And as in the Kingdom-State, ſo unto the endleſs Ages of Eternity, we ſhall admire Chriſt, both as our Way to the Father, and the Father's Way unto us. Thus having ſhewn, which Way the Sons of God come to enjoy their Inheritance: I proceed,

Sixthly, To enquire, When they enter

enter upon the Possession of it. In answer to which we may observe,

1. That the Sons of God did enter upon the Possession of their Inheritance in Christ, when he ascended to Heaven as their great Representative. For as the High Priest of old did enter into the holy Place, as the Representative of the People, having *the Names of the twelve Tribes upon* his *Breast-plate*, Exod. 28. 29. So likewise our great High Priest, the glorious Antitype of that Figure (when he had *put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself*, Heb. 6. 29. went *with his own Blood into the holy Place*, even *into Heaven itself, having obtain'd eternal Redemption for us*, ver. 12. *that* so *he might receive the Promise of eternal Inheritance* in the Right of his Obedience, *ver.* 15. and he enter'd into Glory, not as a single Person for himself alone, but for us also. For we were all mystically in him, when as our *Forerunner*, *he for* [*us*] *enter'd*, Heb. 6. 20. And as he first took Possession of Glory in our Name

Name and Room, ſo he ſtill keeps it: for *he* [*now*] *appears in the Preſence of God for us*, Ch. 9. 24. Hence it is that we are now ſaid, *to ſit together in heavenly Places in Chriſt Jeſus*, Eph. 2. 6. Again,

2. The Sons of God, in their own Perſons, do enter upon the initial Poſſeſſion of their Inheritance, when the Spirit works Faith in their Hearts, and enables them to lay hold on Chriſt, and eternal Life in him. Faith views Chriſt as the Father's *Salvation* for loſt Sinners, *Iſa.* 49. 6. and eternal Life in him; And *fleeing for Refuge to lay hold on this Hope ſet before it*, Heb. 6. 18. takes God at his Word, in *the Record he hath given of his Son. And this is the Record that God hath given to us eternal Life; and this Life is in his Son*, 1 John 5. 9, 11. Thus the Soul, by Faith, poſſeſſeth the Inheritance, as our Lord witneſſeth, *John* 6. 47. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, he that believeth on me* [*hath*] *everlaſting Life.* And to give us this

Poſſeſſion

Possession by Faith,, is one great End of the Gospel Ministry, As appears by that Commission our Lord gave unto the *Apostle Paul*, when sent unto the Gentiles, *Acts* 26. 18. *To open their Eyes, and to turn them from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God, that they may receive Forgiveness of Sins, and Inheritance among them which are sanctifyd by* [*Faith*] *that is in me.*

And as the Holy Spirit, at first, gives us a real Possession of our Inheritance by Faith, so also *after that* we *have believed*, he further *Seals us up unto the Day of Redemption*, Eph. 1. 13. by which he gives us a more sensible Possession of it. And this he doth as he is the Comforter, by giving us the fullest Assurance of the Inheritance, and sweetest Communion with all the Fulness of God as our own; to the filling us with those unspeakable Joys, which are the First-fruits of Glory. Yea, further,

The Person of the Spirit himself, as

as the Spirit of Grace and Sanctification, the Spirit of Liberty and Conſolation, Light, Life, and Glory, is given unto us as *the earneſt of our Inheritance*, Eph. 1. 14. Thus the Sons of God do initially enter upon the Poſſeſſion of their Inheritance, in the Right and Title, firſt-Fruits and earneſt of it. Again,

3. The Sons of God, do enter upon the compleat Poſſeſſion of their Inheritance, in their Soul-part, at the Time of their Death. This makes 'em have a *deſire to depart*, Phil. 1. 23. and *willing rather to be abſent from the Body*, 2 Cor. 5. 8. becauſe that then they are taken up to be *with Chriſt*, in his immediate Glory-Preſence: Which, indeed, is *far better* than all the Enjoyment of him which they had here by Faith.

But tho' *the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect*, Heb. 12. 23. are now put into the compleat Poſſeſſion of their glorious Inheritance: yet ſo, as that it is but partial, reſpecting their Souls only.

ly. For their Bodies remain ſtill in the Grave, under the Dominion of Death. So that if we will ſee 'em in the full Poſſeſſion of their Inheritance, we muſt look further. In the next place then let us obſerve,

4. That the Time when the Sons of God, in their whole Man, ſhall enter upon the compleat Poſſeſſion of their Inheritance, will be at *the Reſurrection of the Juſt*, Luke 14. 14. Then their Bodies ſhall be raiſed from the Dead, re-united to their Souls, and ſo their whole intire Perſons, taken up into the Enjoyment of that Glory which is prepared for them. And that, 1. In the Glory-Kingdom of *Chriſt*: And, 2. In the ultimate State of Glory after the laſt Judgment.

The Sons of God, as the bleſſed of the Father, ſhall then *inherit* that *Kingdom* that was *prepared for* them *from the Foundation of the World*, Mat. 25. 34. *For when* Chriſt *who is our Life ſhall appear, we alſo ſhall appear with him in Glory*, Col. 3. 4. And *ſit with* Chriſt

Chriſt *in* his *Throne*, Rev. 3. 21. And *then the Righteous ſhall ſhine forth as the Sun, in the Kingdom of their Father*, Mat. 13. 43. *The wiſe ſhall* then *inherit Glory*, Prov. 3. 35. and they that *overcome inherit all Things*, Rev. 21. 7. And ſo great will be the Glory of this happy Day, that the Saints now, at beſt, can have but ſome imperfect Glances of it, while in this diſtant State: Which yet are ſufficient to enable them to *reckon*, with the great *Apoſtle*, *That the Sufferings of this preſent Time, are not worthy to be compared with that Glory which ſhall then be revealed in us*, Rom. 8. 18. It will be a maſſy *Crown of Righteouſneſs*, *Life* and *Glory*, that will then be ſet upon the Saints Heads, 2 *Tim.* 4. 3. *Jam.* 1. 12. 1 *Pet.* 5. 4.

And though the [Manner] of our poſſeſſing Glory in the Kingdom of *Chriſt*, will be but Temporary: It being to end when the Son *delivers up the Kingdom to the Father*, 1 Cor. 15. 24. Yet even this will be but in order

order that both *Chriſt* and we, may further enter upon the fulleſt, and moſt immediate Poſſeſſion of GOD himſelf as our eternal Lot.

The Son will loſe no Glory by becoming *ſubject unto the Father*, 1 Cor. 15. 28. as the ſole Adminiſtrator of all that vaſt Bleſſedneſs, which both he and his ſhall poſſeſs to Eternity: But Glory will riſe ſo much the higher, by how much the more immediate it will be both to *Chriſt*, and us too; when God in HIMSELF will be [ALL] in all, our Glory to an endleſs Eternity. But how great this Glory will be, together with the Manner of our poſſeſſing it, is yet to be revealed.

When we attempt to view the Sons of God poſſeſſing their Inheritance in the Kingdom-State, their Glory is, even there, ſo bright, that our weak Eyes can't look ſtedfaſtly upon it, ſo as to take in an Idea of it in all its reſplendent Rays: But if we further attempt to caſt an Eye upon 'em in the ultimate State, their Glory there, is height-

heightened out of our Sight! What I ſhall further add, is,

In the *Seventh*, and laſt place, ſomething by way of Reflection. From the Whole, then, Is it ſo, that the Sons of God have an Inheritance, that this is no leſs than GOD HIMSELF; that this Portion was early made theirs, freely, abſolutely, irreverſibly ſettled upon them, and that they initially now do, and compleatly ſhall, e're long, enter upon the Poſſeſſion of it: What manner of Lives then ſhould the Saints live in this World!

How ſhould we admire the Care and Kindneſs of God our Father, in that he hath not left us *Orphans*, or like fatherleſs Children, that have none to provide for 'em! *John* 14. 18. But *having predeſtinated us unto the Adoption of Children*, Eph. 1. 5. in the ſame infinite Grace, he hath alſo made a rich Proviſion for us; every way anſwerable to his own Greatneſs as God, and that Nearneſs of Relation

we ſtand in to himſelf! *He is not aſhamed to be called our God: for he hath prepared for us a City*, Heb. 11. 16.

Again, How ſhould we adore the Greatneſs of God's Love, that would give us no leſs for our Portion, than his Great SELF! Oh, the immenſe Depths of JEHOVAH's Grace, that becauſe he could give us no greater, he gave us HIMSELF! Oh, what are we, vile, deſpicable Worms, that the great God ſhould thus ſet his Heart upon us, and make over himſelf to us!

Further, Is GOD HIMSELF, *Our Portion*, Lam. 3. 24. While the far greater Part of Mankind have the Creatures for theirs; *their Portion in this Life*, Pſal. 17. 14. What Reaſon have we to admire diſtinguiſhing Grace! The Lord might have given us a Portion of outward good things, and have ſent us away from himſelf for ever. And how miſerable then had

had our Caſe been! Let's think upon the unſpeakable Miſery of thoſe that are *without God in* this *World*, Eph. 2. 12. and ſhall be ſent away from him in the next, with a *Depart from* [*Me*] *ye curſed, into everlaſting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels*, Mat. 25. 41. To raiſe our Admirations of diſtinguiſhing Grace: For this might have been our Lot. We were the ſame *by Nature as others*, Eph. 2. 3. nothing but ſovereign Grace made the Difference. And while, of *the ſame Lump, ſome are made Veſſels unto Honour, and others to Diſhonour*, Rom. 9. 21. How adorable is Divine Sovereignty! Did God ſet his Heart upon us, when he paſſed by others; put us among the Children, when they were left in a State of Alienation: And reſerve the Inheritance for us, as *the Children of Promiſe*, Gal. 4. 28. while on the reſt he only beſtows common Gifts, and ſends them away! even as *Abraham gave all that*

he had to Isaac: *But unto the Sons of the Concubines he only gave Gifts, and sent 'em away*, Gen. 25. 5, 6. What Thanks shall we render for this Grace!

Again, Is JEHOVAH, our Portion: Who then can count up our Riches, or tell what vast Stores we have in GOD! Riches, beyond the Comprehension of Men and Angels! *Durable Riches*, Prov. 8. 18. *that neither Moth nor Rust can corrupt, nor Thieves break through to steal*, Mat. 6. 20. Enough for Time, and enough for Eternity! Yea, though JEHOVAH's Riches have been ever flowing forth to the Supply of thousands of poor, indigent, starving Creatures; yet are they not subject to the least Waste, or Diminution!

Again, Is the LORD our Portion: How is it, dear Saints, that being *the King's Sons*, Heirs of God, and Joint-Heirs with Christ, we are so *lean from Day to Day*, 2 Sam. 13. 4. Let's be convinc'd of our Folly in setting our Hearts

Hearts upon Trifles, *Things which are not*, Prov. 23. 5. How oft through Unbelief, do we *forſake the Fountain of Living Waters, and hew out* to ourſelves *broken Ciſterns that can hold* none, *Jer.* 2. 13.? Is the LORD HIMSELF, our Portion: Then let us not, in depth of Ingratitude, ſet our Hearts upon any thing elſe as ſuch.

Are we in the Enjoyment of Creatures, let us labour to enjoy God in 'em, and glorify him for them: But let us not ſet our Hearts upon 'em, for *wherein* are they *to be accounted of*? *Iſa.* 2. 22. We may have them one Day, and want 'em the next: *Vanity* and Uncertainty, are wrote upon all the Creatures, *Eccleſ.* 12. 8.

God's beſt Children are ſometimes ſtript *naked* of Creature-Enjoyments, *Job* 1. 21. And ſhould this be our Caſe, let us not murmur, and repine at the Hand of our Father. He's but purſuing his own Glory, and our Good,

in the moſt emptying Diſpenſation. With the deepeſt Submiſſion and higheſt Chearfulneſs, let's bow to divine Sovereignty; and bleſs our God when he taketh, as well as when he giveth. And ſurely we have the higheſt reaſon to do ſo, ſince whatever he takes, he'll never take away [HIMSELF] from us. And in having him, we have ALL. Ay, tho' we were ſtript naked of every thing elſe; yet even then, *as having nothing*, in an Eye of Senſe, we may, by Faith, *poſſeſs all Things* in GOD, 2 *Cor.* 6. 10.

Again, Is GOD our Portion: We may hence be aſſured, that we *ſhall not want any good Thing*, Pſal. 34. 10. *The LORD liveth, and bleſſed be our Rock*, Pſal. 18. 46. And becauſe he liveth ever, we can never want. If Proſperity be good for us, we ſhall not want this: And if Adverſity be good for us, we ſhall not want that: For having given himſelf in Covenant to be *our God*, 2 Cor. 6. 16. all the

divine

divine Perfections ſtand engaged to do us good. Everlaſting Mercy, boundleſs Grace, abundant Goodneſs, Almighty Power, are joyntly engaged to ſupply all our Wants, thro' Time and to Eternity; in that Way and Manner, Degree and Meaſure, which infinite Wiſdom ſees beſt, for the Glory of JEHOVAH's Name, and our higheſt Bleſſedneſs.

Once more, ſince JEHOVAH HIMSELF, is the Inheritance of his Children: How ſhould this Engage us to *walk worthy of God unto all pleaſing*? Col. 1. 10. To an holy, humble, becoming Converſation, Truſting in the Lord for ever, *Iſa.* 26. 4. rejoycing in him always, *Phil.* 4. 4. earneſtly expecting that happy Day, when we ſhall enter upon the compleat Poſſeſſion of his own great SELF, *Rom.* 8. 23. *Rev.* 21. 7. glorify him perfectly, and enjoy him fully; which will fill us with inconceivable Bleſſedneſs, while our GOD, will be our Glory,

Life,

Life, Light, and all in all unto Eternity, *Iſa.* 60. 19. 1 *Cor.* 25. 28.

Thus according to the Meaſure of Light received, I have endeavoured to prove, that the Sons of God have an Inheritance, to ſhew what it is, when it was made theirs, how ſettled upon them, which way they come to enjoy it, And when they enter upon the Poſſeſſion of it: And have given ſome hints by way of Reflection. But nothing leſs than the full Enjoyment of our Inheritance, can fully acquaint us with theſe Things: Our Conceptions now are but weak, and our Expreſſions childiſh, 1 *Cor.* 13. 11.

For my own part, I often compare myſelf unto a Child that begins to learn Letters. It firſt with difficulty learns one, and then another: And when it has learned the Alphabet, yet ſtill it remains greatly ignorant of its uſe; and knows not how to put Letters together and make Words. And when a little further advanced in

Know-

Knowledge, ſo that it begins to ſpell here and there a Word; yet ſtill it is at a loſs how to put Words together and make Sentences. And when it can do that, yet ſtill it is a great while e're it becomes a Maſter of Language; and knows how to ſpeak in all the Elegancies of the Tongue it has been Learning. Juſt thus it is with me. I am taught here one Piece of Truth, and there another: But yet I find but little Skill in putting Letters of Truth together, ſo as to form intelligible Words out of 'em. And if I now and then make out a few Words, yet ſtill I find much difficulty, in putting Words together into apt Sentences: I mean, in joyning the ſeveral Parts of divine Truth together, ſo as to make out the great Doctrines of the Goſpel, in their Order, Beauty, and Conſiſtency, like apt Sentences, in a juſt Dependence upon each other.

And even thoſe Saints that have made the greateſt Proficiency in the School

School of *Chriſt*, and are beſt skilled in the heavenly Tongue, do yet *know but in part*, 1 Cor. 13. 9. and are far from expreſſing heavenly Things in their own *Idiom*, or proper Form of Speech: So that the Perfection of the Language is yet unknown; while it is as it were tranſlated into an earthly Form: Heavenly Glories being deſcribed by Earthly. The *Apoſtle Paul*, indeed, was *caught up into Heaven*, and heard the Language in its pure naked Glory, unclothed of all its earthly Forms: But when he deſcends into this low Land, he declares, that the Words he had heard, were both *unſpeakable* in themſelves, and *unlawful to be uttered* in this preſent State, 2 *Cor.* 12. 2, 4.

But, it's our unſpeakable Mercy, that things will not be always thus with us. For *that which is perfect* ſhall *come*: And then our imperfect *Knowledge ſhall be done away. And we ſhall know, even as alſo we are known*, 1 Cor. 13. 10, 12. Mean while the Sons of God have the higheſt Cauſe of

of unſpeakable Joy, in that now, being *Children*, they are *Heirs of God, and Joynt-Heirs with* Chriſt, *Rom.* 8. 17. tho' *it doth not yet appear what* they *ſhall be*, 1 John 3. 2. when they enter upon the full Poſſeſſion of their *undefiled, incorruptible*, and *unfadeable Inheritance*; which is *reſerved in Heaven for* them: Who *are kept by the Power of God, through Faith unto Salvation, that's ready to be revealed in the laſt Time*, 1 Pet. 1. 4, 5.

5 FE 62

FINIS.

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